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Vulnerable London: Narratives of Space and Affect

in a Twentieth-Century Imperial Capital

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Vulnerable London: Narratives of Space and Affect in a Twentieth-Century Imperial Capital

by

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Dedication

To my English mother, Patricia Avery, who taught me to love reading, and my American father, Walter Avery, who taught me the pleasures of places and who used to sneak my library books and read them.

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Vulnerable London: Narratives of Space and Affect in a Twentieth-Century Imperial Capital

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This dissertation examines sensation in twentieth-century narratives of London and argues that vulnerability is a constitutive experience of the post-imperial city. Sensations of vulnerability in London arise because of the built environment of the city: its status as an imperial center and a global capital create important intersections of local, national, and global concerns which render the city itself vulnerable. I chart the trajectory of vulnerability as an affective history of London that is documented in cultural texts ranging from fiction and film to political debates and legal materials. Since the sensational experiences of the present partly arise from the materials of the past embedded in the landscape, affective histories create new ways of understanding history as a spatial experience. The narrated sensations of the city make vulnerability legible as a persistent feature of twentieth-century London life. I begin with a modernist, imperial London, in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and in Parliamentary debates from the same year (1925). Ambivalence about London's dual status as a local site and as a national and international capital is a response to London's vulnerable position at the end of the Great War. Next, I turn to World War Two London and Elizabeth Bowen's *The Heat of the Day*. I discuss intimacy as an important national

feature in narratives of London during the crisis of this war. National narratives about intimacy constructed by Winston Churchill and heard on BBC radio respond directly to London's defensive vulnerability. My third chapter concerns Margaret Thatcher's 1980s London and the crucial role autonomy plays in constructing London as an invulnerable, international financial and civic capital. Alan Hollinghurst's *The Swimming-Pool Library* documents Londoners' attempts to make sense of their autonomy in a postimperial capital. My final chapter examines sensations of social and political belonging in contemporary London through reading Stephen Frears's *Dirty Pretty Things* alongside legal documents about immigration. I contend that reading cultural texts affectively creates counter-histories of the city that accommodate a deeper range of experiences than do traditional histories and offers to literary studies a new way of understanding the relationship between official and unofficial histories.

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Introduction: London's Sensational Structure

On Friday, July 7, 2005, four suicide bombers detonated bombs on three London Underground trains and a double-decker bus. Fifty-six people were killed (including the four bombers); 700 were injured. The subway bombs exploded on famous and busy commuter and tourist lines—the east- and westbound Circle Line, which loops around the city, and the southbound Piccadilly Line, which heads into Russell Square. The bus, a double-decker, exploded in Tavistock Square, Bloomsbury. Smaller in scale than both the attacks in the US four years earlier and the train bombings in Madrid in 2004, they nevertheless reinforced London's status as a global capital, a target destination in many senses of the phrase.

On the local scale, newspapers reported on the much-maligned CCTV cameras[1] on the streets, saying that they were, in this case, instrumental forms of information. They wrote about the "dignity" of Londoners and their stoic ability to "move on" and to downplay the event. In an article in *The Guardian* about the commemorations a year later, a commuter was quoted as saying, "You can't allow yourself to be affected by the acts of these unstable people. That is giving in to terrorism. It's the British stiff upper lip thing. It would be entirely self-destructive to be too preoccupied by it."[2] Of course, Londoners *were* affected by it: the story was about the two minutes of silence at 8:50 am, the time of the first bombings a year earlier. Shaun Moggan, the commuter quoted, either deliberately attended the vigil or had his commute disrupted by reporters asking him to provide analytic commentary. Some people brought flowers or made special trips or stood in silence commemorating the dead in London and across the country and internationally. A rise in

racialized—and specifically anti-Muslim—violence occurred in and around London. London mayor Ken Livingstone, the Metropolitan Police, and the national government changed policies and procedures for entering and exiting the city and the country. Each of these actions, from personal responses to institutional policy changes was meant to provide a measure of security. They stress both personal and national, individual and political loss, defensiveness, and security, and they collectively suggest that the city of London felt vulnerable, a category of sensation that crosses boundaries and has national implications.

The reactions across London, as well as nationally and internationally, play into two accurate but paradoxical truths about this city: on the one hand, what happens in London is local, specific, and uncontrollable (in the sense that no large urban population can be fully guarded or patrolled or protected or overseen). On the other hand, London is the national capital, historically and currently politically important, and thus events such as the subway bombings have a profound impact on national and intranational politics. While citizens publicly acknowledge that there is no way to plan totally for such odd, comparatively rare and unforeseen events, political leaders often feel obligated to do exactly that. London's postimperial status—as an international cultural and financial site—requires it to contend with the local, the national, and the global simultaneously. This simultaneity is not new: the IRA bombings in London's financial district in the 1990s, for instance, affected banking in Shanghai. Likewise, after the 2005 subway bombings, the mistaken shooting of a suspected subway bomber by Metropolitan police became an international incident. The welfare of London citizens cannot be separated from the global "war on terrorism."

The city is vulnerable by design. While England's island nature historically protected its boundaries, modern technologies have shaped the city and the country to suit new purposes. London is built for commerce and dwelling and tourism and movement—all of these constructed for local and national interests and also for international trade and immigration—not defense. Vulnerability, then, is at the center of the concern over borders and whether they are "secure." Susceptibility to attack implies crossing boundaries that are physical and metaphysical, societal and personal, and most of the defensive measures in place in London are unobtrusively designed to facilitate unobtrusively legal movement rather than curtail it. In fact, all defensive mechanisms have traditionally been in keeping with the design of the city. Until recently, border security, surveillance, and policing have been phrased in terms of ease and comfort of movement; now they are imagined differently. The CCTV cameras, for instance, which operate in 22 of London's 32 boroughs,[3] and have been in use since the 1970s but they were aggressively installed in the 1990s after two IRA bombs exploded in London's financial district.[4] The cameras were meant to warn of dangerous or criminal acts, to inform rather than prevent. One of John Major's successful campaign slogans for these cameras, "If you've got nothing to hide, you've got nothing to fear,"[5] recalls slogans from World War II propaganda posters and suggests that the cameras are part of the protective measures of good citizenship rather than a more invasive governmental practice. In the aftermath of the subway bombs, several members of Tony Blair's cabinet as well as London Mayor Ken Livingstone publicly acknowledged that, while the CCTV cameras provided important information about *what* occurred, they could not prevent such occurrences.[6] In fact, there may be no effective way to prepare for (and few ways to prevent)

the actions of people who are ready to die in order to destroy and kill. Blair's pronouncement tacitly acknowledges that London's social and architectural structure depends upon freedom of movement, which might make both people and infrastructure vulnerable; and that vulnerability is therefore understood to be a necessary part and consequence of such freedom.[7]

Vulnerability also seems to be at stake in the invocation of the phrase "British stiff upper lip," which appeared repeatedly in stories about the bombings. Although it is meant to imply personal strength, defiance, and integrity in meeting a challenge, it also belies a sense that defensiveness is protection against vulnerability, that an attitude will somehow make a difference in *how* people are affected by difficult situations. As Shaun Moggan argued above about the subway bombings, "it would be entirely self-destructive to be too preoccupied by it." Perhaps he is right, but his comment strikes me as inaccurate, and not just because of the hyperbolic use of "entirely." Most people don't have full, rational control over how they react to danger, nor is preoccupation necessarily self-destructive. At least on an individual scale, there's often little conscious control over how someone is affected by such things. But Moggan's comments are a commonsense piece of advice from the vantage point of a year after the bombings. And in that context, he has a point. Personal and political decisions about how to respond to such sensations after the immediate danger has passed, for instance by protecting assets and defending borders, will change how people are collectively affected by vulnerability. The narratives about the subway bombings acknowledge a physical danger from which Londoners and the British cannot fully protect themselves; the invocation of the phrase "British stiff upper lip" similarly suggests a need to contextualize (if not repress) either that knowledge or the specificities of London's historic dangerous moments. Because the bombers

were subsequently described in the press as "Yorkshire Boys" or "Yorkshiremen," an appellation which speaks to their "homegrownness," a sense exists that not only are the English vulnerable to these kinds of attacks but they're doubly vulnerable because they are capable of instigating them. If the attackers also belong to a national "us," the notion that feeling vulnerable can be quelled by defensive measures is dubious. Thus, the feeling of vulnerability, exacerbated by the city's historic susceptibility to fires, epidemics, and bombings, is an important affective category of contemporary London experience.[8]

The question of vulnerability is at play in most of the newspaper articles: some concern personal, bodily vulnerability while others focus on political means of controlling borders, entry, and violent action. Stories about traumatic memory loss, about immigration policies, and about the metropolitan police force's jurisdiction and rights to protect London citizens, for instance, all circulated in the year following the subway bombings. For instance, a Brazilian worker was mistakenly killed by Metropolitan police after he was (also mistakenly) suspected of being one of the "fertilizer bombers," who made an unsuccessful attempt to damage the city shortly after the subway bombings. The subway bombers were arrested two weeks after the subway bombings and convicted in June 2007. Recently, stories have circulated connecting the original bombings to the foiled "fertilizer bombers" after it became clear that they did have ties to the successful earlier attack.

As with most stories that affect a large community and disrupt the infrastructure of a city, the narratives about these bombings start with the physical location and the people affected and, over time, move out into larger concerns and structures, into political problems and solutions which are suddenly larger than the subway lines and its commuters:

vulnerability inheres in both the individual and the nation, the personal and the larger politics. Immediately after the bombings, for instance, numerous reports concerned a "surge" in anti-Muslim hate crimes. The Home Office and the Anti-Terrorism division of Scotland Yard responded by working together to secure the border-entry points, which is a response on a national and international scale. And, as the shock of the bombings subsided, the stories inevitably shifted their focus from those dead, hurt or damaged to those who caused the damage. Connecting these bombings to the earlier terrorist bombings in Madrid and the attacks in the US, the Muslim Council of Britain immediately condemned them.[9] Later, on July 12th 2005, when all four bombers were confirmed to be British citizens, Prime Minister Tony Blair began to work harder to deter "extremists [from] entering the UK" as well as [to] boost support for "moderate Islam."[10] His narrative moved away from the specifics of the London bombing or even the Yorkshire bombers and out into larger, national and international, scales of identity politics.

London's vulnerability was first figured in the injured and dead; as anxieties became more diffuse, several stories circulated about the Underground, linking the city not just to international concerns but also to historic ones. One notable story connected the damages and repairs to the Underground's survival of the bombing during World War II, citing posters springing up in tube stations across London emblazoned with the slogan "London Underground Carried On." The connection between the massive damage done to the architecture of the city in World War II and the comparatively minor damage done in July 2005 is hardly arbitrary. The affect of the city was famously called "Blitz spirit": stoic, unflagging, unfailingly "British," the indomitable willingness of the English people to survive

difficult and dangerous times. It's not clear whether the British Asian and Muslim populations are figured into this characterization, or how, precisely, they complicate this ideal.

Of course, there are important differences between Blitzed London and London today. Then, a specific country, Germany, had declared war on Britain; from 2001 until he stepped down in 2007, Blair backed George W. Bush's amorphous "War on Terror" which seems to have neither spatial nor temporal constraints. London's—and England's—relationship to the rest of the world is also in some confusion today; while the aftereffects of World War II exacerbated its loss of status as an imperial capital, London is now experiencing an entirely different identity crisis. Historians and sociologists such as P.W. Preston and Saskia Sassen position London at the center of a difficult debate about where and how to align itself politically: it is caught between looking eastward to the EU and westward to the US. In the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher's economic policies and close relationship to Ronald Reagan fostered stronger economic ties to the US as she created a new financial district in the rebuilt Docklands area of London. Tony Blair's "rhetorical yes and practical no"[11] to the EU in the 1990s created stronger business, political, and recreational movement between England and other EU countries, but also exacerbated tension over national identities and immigration laws. Similarly, his decision to support President Bush's "war on terror" has not been well received by the EU, and has resulted in massive demonstrations throughout London and the nation. Writing in 1996, Jane Jacobs argued that London's rebuilding of Bank Junction in the financial district in the 1990s "might be thought of as Britain's postimperial return to Europe. In the contemporary City

of London, imperial nostalgias cohabit with the imperative of creating a regional alliance with Europe."[12] That allegiance is no longer clearly associated with a "return" to Europe but instead reflects a more ambiguous course, straddling cultural, financial and political ties with Europe and the United States.

All of these valences of vulnerability—threat of bodily injury, threat to the physical infrastructure of the city, threat of loss of status, threat of international consequences, confusion over the importance and designations of national identities—are made visible first through the landscape, through damaged geography and bodies. The ramifications of vulnerability, including empathy and openness, fear and agitation, violence and protectiveness, arise because of the attacks on public spaces that are meant to damage both architecture and humans; the structural damage is visible in the resulting defensive reactions, and security cameras,[13] and also manifest on both the personal level and throughout the larger political and social structure. The newspapers' accounts of individual and state reactions attest to the intertwining consequences of feeling vulnerable. In my dissertation, I argue that sensations of vulnerability are a constitutive feature of twentieth-century London. I examine narratives about how it feels to live in London in order to understand how vulnerability is narratively traced through the landscape and onto both individual and social forms of engagement with the city.

One of the most important features of the above discussion is that the event itself—the bombing of the subways and street—does not *cause* vulnerability; instead, the multiple reactions to the bombings make vulnerability visible as an identifying sensory experience of London life which also affects the terms of that (collective) life. Vulnerability is a sensation

that arises out of conditions far broader than singular events; this project examines vulnerability as a persistent feature of London life in the twentieth-century and beyond.

I think of vulnerability as a quintessentially contemporary affective register. Like Walter Benjamin's trope of shock and the recent critical interest in trauma my interest is in vulnerability as a sensory process that colors understanding and frames decisions and ideological viewpoints.[14] While vulnerability may always have some component of fear, or at least trepidation, I'm not sure it always requires a response that reacts directly or primarily against (or with, or to), that fear. Feeling susceptible to wounding, feeling vulnerable, can result either in an openness to the potential wound or a defensive closing off to protect from wounding or even a range of protective stances to change the location (or body) in danger of being wounded. The decision to close borders, for instance, is an attempt to keep certain dangers from entering a specific space, not to end the threat, since the perception of threat exists in part because of the fear of boundary-crossings. The possibility of multiple, even conflicting, responses to vulnerability means that it evokes both positive and negative associations. Narratives about personal, fulfilled, intimacy often suggest that vulnerability is positive, valuable, and necessary response in close relationships. Current national registers of vulnerability, however, tend to participate in defensiveness; the assessment of positive or negative associations with defensiveness is frequently a question of political proclivity.

Vulnerability is hardly exclusive to London as a constitutive feature of the city, yet its unique history as an imperial and post-imperial capital renders that affective register a crucial component of understanding the relationship between the political infrastructure of the city and everyday experiences of it. Like Jane Jacobs, I am interested in London specifically as a

post-imperial city. In *Edge of Empire*, Jacobs examines how colonial pasts shape the architecture as well as the commercial, financial and social activities of London and Sydney. Regarding London, she argues that the legacy of colonialism exists in the city's architecture and infrastructure, not just through preservation but in contemporary architectural forms as well. Jacobs reads the narratives embedded in the architecture of the city in order to understand its contemporary connections to the past; I read artistic and non-fiction narratives in order to understand emotional connections to history embedded in imaginative space. I examine London's history as an important material feature of the city—this project uses official, historical documents as evidence which structurally and metaphorically shapes and affects the architectural sites within the narratives themselves. My intent is to investigate how the narrated London landscapes are claimed as sites of political and personal feeling and to uncover relationships between institutional policies and politics and everyday sensations.

Vulnerability and London's Urban History

Thirty-two London boroughs make up the area known as Greater London. One of these boroughs, the City of London, covers a square mile, and is the economic center of the city. Westminster, just to the southwest of the city across Charing Cross, is the political center. In this section, I chart out some the important details of the spaces in this project—especially the civic and financial center of London, the Docklands, and the neighborhoods around the Greater London area—and their histories, in order to provide the urban background for London's vulnerability.

Ancient London, Roman London, was a fortified, seemingly invulnerable city, hard to reach and hard to broach. Historians agree that London was founded by Julius Caesar in 54 BCE.[15] By 40 CE, the Roman Emperor Honorius decreed that British cities must undertake their own defense, and the "administrative center of Roman Britain ceased to exist."[16] Vulnerable even then, Roman London—Londonium—was attacked and burned by Queen Boudicaa of Iceni (now Norway) and her allies in 60 CE; it recovered slowly: shortly after Hadrian visited in 122 CE, "much of Londonium was destroyed by fire."[17] Yet over the next three or four hundred years, Londonium became the principal city in Britain. Roman London's structure as a large city with a large influx of migrant populations—from other English locations, but also from the Roman Empire—serves as an important backdrop for contemporary London's concerns with immigration and control over the city.

The city was unified and fortified circa 886, under Alfred, King of Wessex, but divided once again when Edward the Confessor built his palace at Westminster between 1045 and 1050. William the Conqueror made Westminster the principal royal seat in 1066; the first record of a London mayor appears in 1193; Henry III made London the seat of English government. The parliamentary government formed in part as an extension of the system of Lordships and in part from the Great Congregation—the latter descended from the Anglo-Saxon tradition of folkmoot. The Great Congregation elected the Lord Mayor and at least one of the city's sheriffs; and "from the 16th century until 1918 it also elected [four of the] City's Members of Parliament."[18] This long history of incorporating local and national political structure into the capital city is also a long history of dissension over the civic responsibilities to be maintained by each branch, and it reinforces Jacobs's assertion

that London's "double geography" is an important factor in its construction. For the purposes of this dissertation, the history of placing the local and national seats of government in close proximity to one another points to another instantiation of vulnerability: the difficulties of deciding which branches are in charge of which parts of civic life demands postures ranging from openness to defensiveness, potential reactions to feeling vulnerable. And, of course, the success or failure of civic enterprises—especially those meant to protect the population—can also engender feelings of vulnerability.

London's economic sector has a Roman and an Anglo-Saxon history, too: Roman coins were minted there and later, as "finished cloth replaced raw wool as England's chief export,"[19] London's share of overseas trade increased in comparison to other English port cities and solidified the western sector's monopoly on commercial ventures.[20] The Bank of England, established in 1694, followed suit with these other economic ventures, erected in the financial district. As Sheppard points out,

> [b]y around 1600 London was already by far the largest centre of population, the largest market for consumer goods, and the largest industrial centre in the realm. It was also the chief port and commercial and financial centre as well as the seat of government and the law court, and increasingly it was becoming the national centre of fashion and social intercourse.[21]

Thus, two of London's important districts—the economic sector in the City of London and the political sector in Westminster—have long contended with one another to shape the city. The difficulty of juggling borders that are open to commerce and still defensible creates a

possibility for vulnerability as do the influx of visitors and immigrants and economic disparities and global financial concerns.

London and Paris were, by the end of the Middle Ages, the two capital cities of Western Europe; by the end of the sixteenth century, London had larger financial, commercial, and population growth than any other Western European city; and by the end of the seventeenth century its large and diverse populations qualified it as "cosmopolitan."[22] Through the eighteenth century, many of the claims about London are about its exceptionalism: it was larger than any other English city, more diverse, wealthier, less susceptible to political upheaval but more susceptible to poverty and illness. With the rise of the British Empire, however, the narrative of the city began to change, and the London that is the "heart of the Empire"[23]—an ideal to be followed rather than an odd exception—both takes shape in and is shaped by the national imagination. Thus, the structure of the city and the aspects of vulnerability I discuss in this dissertation—ambivalence, intimacy, autonomy, belonging—come into focus as constitutive features of London only after the Victorian era, after modern, civic institutional spaces became a crucial part of the public geographies of the city, reflecting its status as the "center" of transglobal colonial power. The narratives I examine destabilize the story of London as a centered and centering space specifically because they reconfigure the site as a dynamic and permeable, open to wounding.

Most of London's famous "squares" had been built by the end of the eighteenth century—Grosvesnor was the first, in 1757, followed by Berkeley, Tavistock, and Russell—as had Westminster Bridge (completed in 1762). But, as Peter Ackroyd points out, the City of London "had turned into an enclave"[24] rather than a hub. He cites the linkage of St.

James's Park and Regent's Park, through the construction of Regent Street and Waterloo Place, as well as John Nash's construction of Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square and renovation of Buckingham Palace as important moments in the development of London's metropolis. These projects made London more accessible on a local scale and more recognizable as a global city and international civic center. By the mid-nineteenth century, the city's monumental civic structures were also largely in place: the National Gallery, the British Museum, the Marble Arch, the Obelisk and Nelson's Column, the tube, Westminster Palace, the row of Victorian bank buildings in Bank Junction.

As Ackroyd emphasizes, these civic structures also worked socially to divide the city along economic lines, creating the means to make poverty largely invisible.[25] Thus, by the 1920s, London's urban structure and imperial status had fully changed the ways people thought about the city and the nation, and how they thought of themselves within it: they were vulnerable to the sights and consequences of economic crisis and war. While the political sector of England grew in the 1920s, its economic counterpart struggled: the Great War heavily depleted the City's foreign investments, and commodities trading plummeted. Re-connecting these two boroughs—the political sector and the financial sector—by establishing roads and throughways was an important spatial linking of London's power; it also created new demands on the infrastructure of the city as poverty and illness became increasingly visible features of the landscape.

As Francis Sheppard notes, the overarching features of 1920s London are an increasing population and "mounting metropolitan centralization."[26] Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* takes place within this network, inserting the personal and everyday into the larger

machinations of finance and law. Westminster, at the time, was as concerned with the difficulties of maintaining the local urban structure of London as it was with imperial and global positions. In fact, the British Empire continued to expand through 1947, and the London markets benefited from the extensive—and exploitative—trade coming in from the Docklands.

The Second World War gave Londoners the means, if not the impetus, to fully acknowledge their vulnerability. It changed the landscape and the economic structure of London and paved the way for its post-imperial constructions. London was the first city in England to experience German air power in its full force. On September 7, 1940, and for fifty-seven consecutive nights, thousands of German bombers attacked the city. Over the next months, the bombing continued. They began with six hundred airplanes, focusing on east London; docks were the primary targets, followed by gas stations and power stations. The plan was to destroy the British spirit by bombing the capital's infrastructure. This was not the first time during the war that London had been bombed (Zeppelin attacks damaged the docks in the Great War), but it was the most prolonged and relentless.

One in six London citizens became homeless at some point during the nine months of the blitz. By law vacant houses and apartments were occupied by these displaced people, and while many of them tried to find owners and pay rent, it was an often difficult enterprise. The streets were largely empty of children; most of the 450,000 were dead or evacuated by December of that year. By the time the blitz was over, the London landscape had changed. The city survived, however, giving rise to the powerful legends of courage and resistance of London and its citizens. As Sheppard argues, the "metropolitan defiance and

tenacity were fundamental to the ultimate outcome of the war, and hence to the survival intact of the basic national institutions, notably Crown and Parliament, and even of the nation itself."[27] During the war, street signs were removed to disorient potential enemy infiltrators; iron railings were removed and reused for the "war effort." The city was dotted with urban vegetable gardens and marked by bomb shelters, air raid wardens—Elizabeth Bowen was famously one of them—and ruins. It is an important time in the structuring of local and national London identities, most famously evoked in the repression of vulnerability implicit in the phrase "British stiff upper lip."

After the Second World War, England lost most of its colonies and with them, its international status as a financial capital. These financial difficulties were complemented by a series of difficulties with immigration policies. In the 1950s, citizens from colonies were also British citizens, but large migrant populations and racism changed their status in order to curb the influx. This "problem" with immigration especially affected London. The 1960s and 70s saw some changes to immigration law, but also a rise in racial prejudice in the form of the National Front and increased racial violence, culminating in the riots of the 1980s.

London in the 1980s was caught between financial crisis, riots, and other forms of social upheaval. Thatcher's reign as Prime Minister revitalized the Docklands, forged strong economic ties with the United States, and consistently evoked England's imperial history as a positive national heritage. All of these strategies can be seen as responses to the Cold War, and more broadly as responses to the threat of England's diminished status in a post-imperial age. Thatcher's economic policies exacerbated the divide between the rich and the poor—also a racial divide—in London and across England, which incited riots. She

specifically framed the Falklands/Malvinas War in terms of heritage, and her popularity rose. While she remained focused on London as a global city, she also became involved in the local political scene when she abolished the Greater London Council in order to get rid of Ken Livingstone's involvement in running the city. Known popularly as "Red Ken" because of his socialist background and fervent work for gay rights as well as his involvement in racial politics, Livingstone outlasted Thatcher, becoming Mayor of London. London in the 1980s was marked as much by its past as by its structural changes that led to a thriving economic future. As I argue in Chapter Three, London was characterized by two competing national stories: one which privileges an idiosyncratic local London and one which privileges a national heritage; in both cases autonomy is evoked as the organizing sensation.

Contemporary London is harder to describe than its historical counterparts, but it is marked by new architectures: the British Museum has been renovated and its library moved; the Millennium Eye is a permanent fixture; the Tate Modern has transformed the cultural scene. In fact, contemporary London architecture could be described as catering to tourists: the Jubilee Line, extended in 1999, was created specifically to help tourists move around the city; the Chunnel and England's role in the EU have created cheaper flights and larger numbers recreational visitors to London. But alongside tourist London, there is poverty in The City and other boroughs, racial violence against Muslims and other populations, and council housing and massive demonstrations against the war. There is increasing popular concern over immigration, especially from Muslim countries. London seems to be splitting up as a city: the center of London is a tourist's delight and international financial capital; its other boroughs reflect other histories and specificities. The Roman history of London, a

colonized city, for example, is a relatively recent uncovering. In 1973, under the guidance of the Museum of London, a new Department of Urban Archaeology began delving into the ruins of Roman London. Over the next fifteen years, a wall, a harbor, a basilica and an amphitheatre were all uncovered. This city infrastructure was designed to improve Roman citizens' movement in the city; these features were also part of its defensive structure. This Roman past can serve to support histories that run counter to more populist national narratives: as the past is uncovered in the landscape, new sensational responses may arise.

The return of the ancient past to contemporary London emphasizes its complex and troubling history as an imperial city; by the 1970's, Britain's status as an imperial and economic power had dwindled, and a nostalgia for Imperial Britain arose—the latter is especially visible in the rise of "Raj" literature, film, and interest in popular histories of Empire.[28] Even as such narratives can bolster institutional British and London histories, the recuperation of Roman London into contemporary experiences of the city can be seen as way to construct alternate traditions and histories to the familiar national stories of imperial power. Furthermore, the insertion of London's status as a colonized city into its national presence can be seen as a modern means of reinterpreting the past to include vulnerability as an important component of its history. As I suggested above, London seems to be struggling to identify who belongs to it, who belongs in it; belonging is the sensation I take up in Chapter Four.

Each of these historical structures of London—the economic and political sectors, the docks, the institutions which bespeak its imperial past and post-imperial present, then, remain in the current landscape and shape the structure of civic feeling and identity. My

readings of the affective experiences of London are ultimately intended to demonstrate the ethical role of emotions in public life: the ways they inform opinion and action, the ways they instruct worldviews.

Emotional Geography

The theoretical framework I have developed for this project draws from cultural geography. The connection between space and emotion is a crucial one in this dissertation; three aspects of space in particular pertain to my project and form a theoretical frame for my case studies. First, the phenomenology of space ties affective experiences explicitly to the urban landscape. I follow thinkers such as Gaston Bachelard, who wrote "Je suis l'espace oú je suis" ("I am the space where I am"),[29] suggesting that space and being cannot be separated. Jean Merleau-Ponty similarly argues that the "perceived world is grasped only in terms of direction, we cannot dissociate being from oriented being."[30] Experience can be understood only in relationship to an external and material world, and experience is a sensory process that involves a range of tactile, mental and psychic responses. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan sees these sensations as ranging from the "direct and passive senses of smell, taste, and touch, to active visual perception and the indirect mode of symbolization."[31] Experiences of spaces and places, then, as they have both active and passive, both direct and indirect components, are constructed by and through these processes, and thus physical, cognitive and sensory data—from the very smells, tastes and feel of the world to more abstract, internally felt reactions to the world—become crucial information, the way we make sense of the world.

This stance is extended in Tuan's work. He argues that our orientation influences architecture: up and down, front and back, left and right, for instance, are not only important spatial coordinates, but they also carry with them cultural connotations of "better" and "worse," which are also aesthetic and even social orientations that influence spatial designs and institutional structures.[32] He further argues that the built environment not only encodes our own worldviews in its spatial practices but it also constructs our experiences and knowledge. For instance, he argues that, as humans transform the land, they are in turn transformed. For Tuan, this process is primarily a bodily transformation, involving muscle memory and knowledge and cognitive and experiential development. The result, as Tuan phrases it, is that "the building or architectural complex now stands as an environment capable of affecting the people who live in it. Manmade space can refine human feeling and perception."[33] Throughout my dissertation, I use Tuan's definition of spatial experiences as including and constructing affective experiences as well, and demonstrate some of the ways that the institutional processes governing the city—its history makers and keepers as well as the official sites of national history—both shape and are shaped by such affective responses.

Queer theorists in particular are accustomed to writing and thinking in such ways. The connections between politics and gender, between policing sexual bodies and desire, between affective ways of being and institutional structures, have all been incisively analyzed by critics such as Lauren Berlant, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Sara Ahmed. Following psychoanalytic and phenomenological models of being, each of these critics has argued that embodied, affective responses to the environment are fundamental to our understanding of it. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Touching/Feeling* is a book whose title suggests that space and

affect are intertwined. She explores critical methods of connecting what would seem unlikely candidates for useful emotional reactions—paranoia, shame, even what it feels like to be dying—to shift understandings of individual and collective experiences from separable categories of public and private or personal and political to an integrated understanding of their intersections. Such methods show how personal sensations inform political engagement. Sedgwick's collection of essays opens up the range of emotional sensations I discuss in this dissertation, especially in Chapter Three, where I take up sensations of autonomy, and Chapter Four, where I examine belonging. While Sedgwick's and Berlant's projects are tied to queer politics, I extend their work into other spheres of political life, and focus on post-imperial London as an important structure which gives rise to public and private emotional registers.

I maintain that sensations arise because of the built environment and the institutional structure of the city, and that looking at space necessarily entails paying attention to affect. Space and affect are intertwined: urban spaces in particular, because they have been deliberately shaped by human forces and experiences, are best understood in the context of their inhabitants' internal and external responses and sensations, and such sensations are similarly supported and constructed not just within space but by space. Space and affect matter to literary studies because they both are understood through narratives. In other words, the effect of shared affective responses is visible through narratives of space. The effects of some emotions—those which have discernible internal and external consequences—are multiple, and reside not just in bodies but in larger cultural phenomena as well. London matters to literary studies for the same reasons it matters economically and

politically: it's a major world capital, and its transitions and responses are historically and contemporaneously important. No other city in the English-speaking world has the same kind of power and influence on culture that London historically has had and continues to have. Thus, London is an obvious choice, narrative a necessary one, and space and affect, while seemingly unrelated, are in fact vital components of how we understand culture. And, to illustrate the significance of this spatial/affective lens, I offer a series of case studies that chart London's affective histories in the twentieth century.

Affective histories provide counter-narratives to official histories and, because the emotional states I describe are spatial in nature, they also provide a connection between the individual and collective experience that sheds light on both. In each chapter, I have paired popular cultural texts set in London—three novels and a film—with official documents, memoirs, and other materials in order to examine both the sensational experiences of the city and the narratives' complex construction of personal and civic identities. London is a crucial site in constructions of British identity; it came to be that way largely in the eighteenth century, as I mentioned above. Moreover, a phenomenological view of being—one that has been adopted by many cultural geographers and theorists of identity politics—demonstrates how experiences of the city and the emotional timbre of its citizens are mutually constitutive.

Emotional responses to the city matter, then. They arise from geographic and institutional conditions; so I focus on vulnerability in my reading of newspapers articles in order to demonstrate the efficacy of examining intersecting institutional and personal emotional responses to particular events. Emotions, as a general category of experience, are

ordinary experiences, and generally viewed as internal and private registers. While national registers of feeling like mourning and patriotism may connect to everyday experience, they are the exception. Connecting ordinary experience to larger understandings of the world—whether those understandings be political, existential, practical—is part of the pleasure and use of literature. My project is rooted in a deep pleasure derived from reading as a form of shared experience, not just by virtue of the ways texts both imagine and construct audiences but also because fictional texts enable readers to participate imaginatively in worlds and circumstances otherwise closed to them. My decision to pair each text with official documents is part of an exploration of how literary or imaginative "worlding" amplifies the emotional registers in institutional spatial narratives. By putting official and unofficial narratives in conversation with one another, I contribute to the extensive archive of London literature and criticism a new way of understanding the connection between the two. Narrative is the key, linking embodied space to a zeitgeist of feeling that extends into more abstract, institutional and national responses. Thus, my impetus to look at the literary texts as a kind of emotional travel guide is supported by institutional documents that unwittingly serve to extend the embodied sensations arising in the artistic texts.

My decision to examine singular sensations in each chapter—ambivalence in Chapter One, intimacy in Chapter Two, autonomy in Chapter Three, and belonging in Chapter Four—is guided by the fictional texts themselves. In order to examine spatial narratives, I needed both to identify texts that in foregrounded London's presence in the work and narratively described both London and its material environment. I also needed to make sure that each of the affective responses I discuss has a fairly straightforward spatial component:

ambivalence, for instance, requires at least two separable categories, and separation is specifically a spatial orientation; intimacy requires another a felt sense of closeness, as well as knowledge. As geographer Yi-Fu Tuan points out, knowledge is an experiential form of learning, and thus is both directly and indirectly spatial. Autonomy requires freedom of movement; belonging requires consensually shared space.

Second, each sensation highlights a key feature of London's dynamic status at an important historical juncture: the interwar years in chapter one, the Blitz of World War Two, Thatcherite England, and London in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks and the start of the so-called global "war on terror." One of the ancillary concerns of this project is to chart subtle responses to geographies of war: the texts chart responses to a city which is not necessarily under direct threat of attack but which is still feeling the subtle effects (and after-effects) of international power crises and violence. If a narrated text provides a rich, working knowledge of how we apprehend and inhabit the world, then looking at narratives which take up the project of recording city life in times of transition or crisis should be especially instructive. The first chapter considers the interwar years: the appellation "interwar" can work only anachronistically to describe the tension and ambivalence over England's place in international politics, to reconcile its past with its present. I take up the crisis of war directly in Chapter Two, which looks at Blitzed London; Chapter Three looks at 1980s London, when England is at war in the Falklands and imagines itself facing a health crisis in AIDS. The final chapter examines London just after the September 11 attacks in the US but before the subway bombings in 2005; it is a London engaging with war but only indirectly involved in it.

Vulnerability and violence are inherently linked; the connection between vulnerability and the affective responses I identified above may be less obvious. Vulnerability is itself an ambivalent category of experience: it can imply a reluctant or even forced openness or can imply a generosity, a porous deliberate exchange. Ambivalence captures the dual nature of vulnerability, as well as the irresolution of vulnerability since the possibility of being wounded is constant and itself irresolvable. In the years following the Great War, ambivalence best describes how vulnerability is visible in the landscape. I begin, then, with ambivalence as a structuring affect of London city life because that sensation directly responds to London's multiple spatial placements as a local site and a national and international capital. I move to intimacy in order to think about the connection between local and national identities, and the kinds of knowledge these identities suppose, insist upon, or presume. Intimacy implies vulnerability.

Next, autonomy reflects both London's evolving status as an international commercial site and as a contested site for various personal and political freedoms. Autonomy must be curtailed in order to be experienced; the limits of freedom make visible sites and registers of vulnerability. In 1980s London, those sites are tied to racial configurations and its imperial history. Finally, I take up belonging in order to raise the possible configurations of multiple national identities occupying one national site. Belonging and intimacy are related but different modes of registering vulnerability; belonging implies a larger communal responsibility than intimacy and also suggests boundaries which intimacy attempts to cross.

Affect and politics together uniquely shape cultural understandings and experiences has unique importance for London. As Sara Ahmed has argued, affective reactions to living in London are actively used to support political agendas. For instance, she argues that hatred has been used to "define the limits or the conditions of…hospitality"[34] toward immigrants: some are welcome while others are not. Such affective "economies" work within culturally understood ethnic and racial categories; in this way they reinforce historic paradigms of imperialism. Like Jane Jacobs, Ahmed examines material histories in order to understand how contemporary London reflects and/or refracts its imperial heritage; while Jacobs looks at the urban planning, architecture and demographics of London, Ahmed looks at cultural constructions. Ahmed's work examines bodies as sites of resistance and complicity to political situations; she focuses on the body as a site where the personal and the political meet. My approach is different: I am interested in the ways embodiment and sensation inflects narratives and give rise to counter-histories. My case studies thus examine narratives as material histories of the city that give shape to some of the affective components of experiencing it.

Space is an important subject of and within narratives.[35] David Harvey has famously and persuasively argued that geography is an under-developed and crucial component to understanding history, especially colonial, imperial and post-imperial histories; he also coined the important term "cognitive mapping" discussed below. As Edward Soja argues in *Postmodern Geographies*, critical discourses that privilege conceptions of time and history over space and geography are characteristics of modernism. Post-modern positions, however, call for constructing "an appropriate interpretive balance between space, time, and

social being,"[36] and, Soja suggests, such an interpretive framework would make visible social conditions and ways of being that have traditionally been elided, overlooked or ignored. In *Imperial Leather*, for instance, Anne McClintock explains anachronistic space, a concept important in thinking about London's structural impact on colonization (an idea I return to in Chapter Four), this way:

> According to the colonial version of this trope, imperial progress across the space of empire is figured as a journey backward in time to an anachronistic moment of prehistory. By extension, the return journey to Europe is seen as rehearsing the evolutionary logic of historical progress forward and upward to the apogee of the Enlightenment in the European metropolis. Geographical difference across *space* is figured as a historical difference across *time*.[37]

Using the term "anachronistic" to refer to the slippage between the terms "time" and "space" in colonial narratives, McClintock persuasively argues that this slippage is a means of establishing cultural dominance over the unfamiliar. This is one of the reasons, she explains, that English imperialism brought about as much anxiety as it brought about domination. That domination was certainly present in the colonial landscape: as McClintock shows, it was evident in the material productions at the "center" of imperial productions as well. My dissertation examines how those material histories filter down and across into later conceptions of London spaces; and as the center collapses, vulnerability becomes a more pervasive and important register than "anxiety."

The materials I chose for this project create some neat divisions for the dissertation. The primary fictional texts in Chapters One and Three (*Mrs. Dalloway* and *The Swimming-Pool Library*) deal fairly directly with history and use space to construct counter-narratives that read institutional histories through spaces. The primary fictional texts in Chapters Two and Four (*The Heat of the Day* and *Dirty Pretty Things*) have largely erased history to construct their counter narratives and create specificity, with few overt historical references, through space. Since the dissertation also has a fairly neat and deliberate chronological structure, and moves, broadly speaking, from modernist to postmodern texts,[38] these two ways of establishing spatial/affective narratives are potentially instructive grounds for further inquiry. All of the fictional texts are written primarily to do cultural work beyond examining the sensations of the city, yet each eloquently contributes to its affective history. Similarly, although all the official texts I discuss were meant to have an effect on the landscape (because each reflects a political stance and a civic power which changes the land) and are not meant to be read affectively, they also contribute to London's affective history.

Narrating space, and especially connecting history to its material present, is an important method for creating and understanding counter-histories, as Pamela Gilbert suggests:

> Ultimately...time and space cannot, of course, be separated. Just as space determines and qualifies narrative, narratives shape people's understandings and uses of space. In their appropriate efforts to refocus on materialism, recent studies have failed to emphasize that people's perceptions—their

> narratives about themselves and their environments—come often to have material force in the transformation of the built and natural landscape.[39]

Gilbert's discussion here is familiar to cultural geographers: how we envision space, the stories we tell about it, have an effect on its construction. And, as Gilbert's collection of essays also suggests, the reverse of this is equally true and important. Looking at space within narrative is a means of understanding how emotional responses are formed. Throughout my project, I claim that paying attention to the physical spaces and materials that circulate within the fictional texts is an important and necessary step for situating the forms of cultural memory and identity at work within them. Cultural memories are not simply housed by or within urban structures; rather, just as bodies shape and create experiences by being simultaneously individual and communal, internal and external, so do buildings and cities. Urban structures can participate in cultural discourse both by virtue of their structure (an implicit performance of particular beliefs) and by virtue of their declared function (an explicit performance of use, service and meaning). Thus, in *The City of Collective Memory*, Christine Boyer delineates some of the ways architectural practices—ranging from the building of theatres to the building of cities to the proliferation of texts about these constructions—are deeply connected both to cultural memories and to the declarative organization of these memories. Such materials can generate what Raphael Samuel calls "unofficial knowledge:"[40] an understanding of place which exists apart from academic and scientific discourses, and is available for mass public consumption. Samuel is concerned with popular histories and forms of knowledge as they exist in the actual landscape and popular and academic discourse; my project looks at how cultural narratives

construct popular geographies or unofficial knowledge. I focus on cultural texts precisely because, by narratively mapping emotional and geographic terrain, they function as unofficial forms of knowledge. While it is not within the scope of my project to examine the effects of spatial narratives on the actual London landscape, the chronological structure of the dissertation allows me to note important connections and changes in both the narrated landscape and in attitudes toward London's status as a post-imperial city.

Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau both posit two facets of city living: those material aspects which can be mapped cartographically and those which cannot be conventionally mapped but are nevertheless experienced.[41] Textual representations of the city participate in both of these aspects: they narratively map some of the historical, cartographic, institutional and social features of the city while they construct or reconstruct some of the sensational aspects of living in the city. Spatial descriptions serve to orient readers by evoking larger personal, cultural, and/or social contexts that are rooted in places as well as shaped by them. Some of these descriptions actively seek to perform a "mapping out" of the relationships between embodied sensation, place, and larger social and cultural structures and concerns: these are "narrative maps" or "cognitive maps."

Cognitive mapping is more than a sensory process; it is also a narrative about this process, and thus is not simply or primarily an individual experience. Similarly, Mike Davis' use of the phrase "mental geographies"[42] suggests that cultural texts invent cities through constructing narratives about them. Mental geographies engage in relationships with physical ones, but Davis contends that mental constructions both belie and reproduce the hierarchies of power that help create and shape them in ways not always visible through

other, cartographic, means. And, as Sara Ahmed points out, this approach opens up ways of thinking about "emotion as a form of cultural politics or world making."[43] Thus, narratives of urban geographies can create a subjective lens through which new configurations of identity become possible.

The third way I consider space as an organizing principle throughout my dissertation rests in the particular space I investigate: London. As I have suggested above, the culture of the city as it exists in the narratives I examine is embedded in its imperial (and also, therefore, material)[44] past and post-imperial present. Both imperialism and the emotional states I describe throughout this dissertation—vulnerability, ambivalence, intimacy, autonomy, belonging—are powerful and important geographic phenomena. The affective sensations I identify arise precisely because of London's particular geographies.

Exploring geography and sensation as specifically spatial categories of experience also brings together local and national understandings of that experience. My case studies imply dynamism, since sensations—like urban geographies—are changing phenomena. Like the vulnerability described above, some sensations are importantly related to the structure of the city and such sensations become legible in a variety of narratives; the zeitgeist of feeling seems to come directly from experiencing the city, which is an inherently narrative process. This process of reading affect and architecture in narrative is a necessary and useful means of understanding and charting affective histories of the city.

Affective reactions to the city can also provide new understandings of the relationships between identities constructed and disseminated on the national scale and those constructed on the personal scale. London's "double geography," as Jane Jacobs suggests,

makes that connection all the more important. She writes that contemporary London's "double geography of the global/local is not simply a matter of the global reaching into the local, it is also a matter of the local needing that which is not local in order to constitute itself…For Britain, the experience of division is no longer ordered in quite the same way as it once was [and it] has forged new global and regional alignments."[45] My project examines the felt experience of that division, as expressed in cultural texts, as an important component of understanding London.

Jacobs argues that imperialism and colonialism differ in terms of geographical power. Following Edward Said, she argues that imperialism is "the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory," while colonialism is a phase of imperialism "in which the expansion of the accumulative capacities of capitalism was realized through the conquest and possession of other people's land and labor in the service of the metropolitan core."[46] In the twentieth and twenty-first century narratives I discuss, London would seem, then, to be more clearly defined as a post-imperial city, one whose status as a global city rests on "functions developed during its nineteenth-century colonizations of the world."[47] The books I discuss in Chapters One and Three, Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and Hollinghurst's *The Swimming-Pool Library,* both include characters who have been directly involved in the process of colonization and both explicitly engage in examining the relationship between civic and personal identities. Chapters Two and Four consider problems of imperialism in more oblique, but equally important, ways: in Chapter Two, the predominant narratives are about the power and perseverance of Londoners, and these narratives are an important means of conveying the persistent power of London to the

nation and globally. Chapter Four analyzes illegal immigration in a post-imperial London, highlighting competing configurations of nationality and inclusion; these tensions are exacerbated by a difficult political history following London's fall as an imperial capital.

Putting together these three concepts of space—that space and being are mutually constitutive, that spatial narratives function as counter-histories, and that London's status as a post-imperial site can be examined through affective narratives about the city—my dissertation as a whole offers to literary study a means of reading affectively mapped spatial histories. These affective histories, accounts of sensory experiences of space which emphasize the interstitial relationship between everyday life and institutional means of shaping lives, create a new way of understanding the effects of history by focusing on how historical materials—documents and policies, certainly, but also architectural forms and more abstract conceptions of national identity as well—affect the present and the ordinary. The pairing of fictional texts with official documents further demonstrates the relationship between history and felt experience. Affective histories thus create a new way of understanding history as a spatial experience. As I argue, the narrated sensations of the city make vulnerability legible as a persistent feature of twentieth and twenty-first century London life.

Chapter One

Urban Ambivalence: Woolf and Westminster

One of the first landmarks to appear in *Mrs. Dalloway* is Bond Street, that famously upscale—and now non-existent—street of shops in Mayfair, just outside of Westminster. The second is Big Ben, only it doesn't appear; what's described is the *sound* of the bell. Those famous "leaden circles dissolve in the air."[48] And because these aural emanations are given both heft (from the lead) and insubstantiality (from the dissolution), the tower chimes seem to be strong and unavoidable yet ephemereal, permeating the city. These chimes connect the experiences in the novel to Parliament, whose Clock Tower is topped by Big Ben, and whose deliberations are symbolically linked to the force and wide dispersal of Big Ben's chimes.[49] The preoccupations of Parliament, through Big Ben's chimes, are given both weight and invisible power over the doings of and in the city. They help to create the ambivalence in *Mrs. Dalloway*—a felt sense of irresolution stemming from contradictory yet simultaneously existing categories of existence—that is borne out of an irreconcilable intersection between the personal and the institutional. This intersection, for Woolf, resides equally, but differently, in the dual institutions of commercialism and politics. Although she highlights this ambivalence by situating the personal on the side of the commercial, she ultimately resolves neither the dichotomy nor the ambivalence.

In my introduction, I describe Westminster as an important identifying feature of London because it is the seat of government and because Charing Cross spatially connects London's political power to its economic sector in The City. Below, I consider how Woolf

writes about the economic and the political*;* she does locate them in different sites in Westminster, but she also writes about commerce as something that changes form and crosses boroughs and national boundaries. The difference for Woolf is in the spatial locations of the forms of exchange: with commerce, she can follow the goods, from the docks to the shops; with politics, she finds the materials of history literally and immovably part of the London architecture, in Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament, in the statues, and residing less comfortably in domestic spaces (where national policies are much less comfortable than the commercial materials which adorn home life). I pair Woolf's novel with Parliamentary debates not only because of Big Ben's presiding presence in the novel, but also because Woolf was also deeply interested in Parliament. The Houses of Parliament themselves are an important structure in imagined Londons,[50] and Woolf wrote about them, for *Good Housekeeping* in the 1930s, in a series of six essays now collectively known as *The London Scene.*

Each of the first five essays describes a particular, iconographic London site: "The Docks of London," "Oxford Street Tide," "Great Men's Houses," "Abbeys and Cathedrals," "This is the House of Commons." The last essay—one excluded from the book publication until recently—breaks the frame of the mock travel guide established in the earlier ones, and follows a Mrs. Crowe in "Portrait of a Londoner." Taken together, these essays traverse some of the most familiar London terrain, offering descriptions like little snapshots of fleeting moments. Each of her essays has a strong point of view, and three powerful and thoughtful critics, Susan Merrill Squier, Pamela Caughie and Sonita Sarker,

have used this collection to discuss Virginia Woolf's ambivalence about the city, about England and Englishness, about social and civic roles.

For Squier, that ambivalence is geographically and socially located in London, and is a crucial—if not always successful—vehicle for Woolf's narrative roles as both critical insider and provocative outsider. That ambivalence is equally critical in nature for Caughie, a "stance against certainty, against a moralizing egotism, against the desire to prevail that Woolf recognized as the patriarchal position."[51] She examines Squier's argument in order to consider connections between writing as both an aesthetic and material product, as well as inherent contrasts in and of the city and its productions. Finally, for Sarker, the ambivalence in *The London Scene* stems directly from Woolf's own uneasy and distrustful reactions to institutional forms of Englishness. Sarker argues, "while Woolf's feminism informs her ambivalent nationalism, both are inflected by an Englishness which constitutes itself as the unracialized norm against which Others are marked."[52] This grouping of essays and essayists is useful for thinking about how it is that ambivalence makes its way into the London landscapes, characters, institutional markers and the other materials—commercial goods, for instance—in her narratives. Before I turn to *Mrs. Dalloway*, then, I examine three of her essays from the *London Scene*: two essays on commerce and one on the House of Commons.

In "On the Docks," Woolf's sharp eye notices both "the big ships and the little ships, the battered and splendid" on the sea as well as the "decrepit-looking warehouses" on "acres and acres of desolation."[53] But the land is not entirely desolate: she also sees fields and a "grey country church" and, going further upriver, the refuse of commerce as well as

the wares. This essay is about both the beauty of industry and its emptiness. In the last lines, she puts the people, "us," back into the essay:

> [T]he only thing…that can change the routine of the docks is a change of ourselves….It is we—our tastes, our fashions, our needs—that make the cranes dip and swing, that call the ships from the sea. Our body is their master. We demand shoes, furs, bags, stoves, oil, rice puddings, candles; and they are brought to us….One feels an important, a complex, a necessary animal as one stands on the quay side….Because one chooses to light a cigarette, all those barrels of Virginia tobacco are swung on shore. Flocks upon flocks of Australian sheep have submitted to the shears because we demand woolen overcoats in winter.[54]

Moving from the specific sights and sounds of the docks to a more general observation about what generates all of this activity, the essay is ambivalent about what is seen and the implications of the observations. For instance, the ships and goods from countries all over the globe reflect London's success as an international trade center; the essay reflects positively—at least admiringly—on this enterprise of commerce, and on this instantiation of London as the "heart of the Empire." The confused state of the docks—industrialized, impoverished, urban and rural, city and country—also suggests a more specific and less easily positive understanding of London and its citizens: because of the diversity of people and economic conditions around the docks, impressions range from positive to indifferent to negative. Peter Ackroyd argues that London's perpetual chase for trade, even during World War II, may very well be its stabilizing force, "the pursuit of which rides over any

obstacle or calamity. One of Winston Churchill's wartime phrases was 'Business as usual' and no slogan could be better adapted to the condition of London."[55] Writing of London more than a decade before the London blitz, Woolf articulates London's imperial trading as demonstrating the variegation of Londoners and their relationship to the city as both home and homeland: imperial commerce is a stabilizing force that brings jobs and goods to the city; an unsettling and sometimes ugly if not expressly exploitative business practice; an unsightly blight on the visual beauty of the land; an invisible, forgotten process. While she recognizes beauty and crippling poverty in the landscape as well as human need and human desire, her focus is primarily on registering the categories of land and sea, poverty and wealth, urban and rural, consumer and distributor. And, when it comes to commerce, Woolf recognizes that consumers have choices; the "we" that feels important and necessary is called on to question whether or not such goods are necessary in such quantities and conditions for our inner and outer well-being.

As she turns her attention to Oxford Street, Woolf is still following the consumer who can make choices and changes, only she writes in the third person, until the end of the essay, when she writes in a series of adopted "I"s. She also writes not in terms of the overwhelming and surprising scale of operations but in terms of "refinement." Her discussion of refinement isn't quite the same as the ambivalence I describe above because here she seems to be more interested in *degrees* of refinement rather than separable categories. She starts the essay by connecting it to "On the Docks" (written two months earlier): "Down in the docks one sees things in their crudity, their bulk, their enormity. Here in Oxford Street they have been refined and transformed."[56] She considers refinement again

when she mentions that Bond Street—also famous at the time for its shops[57]—caters to a more upscale clientele; the distinction seems to be that Bond Street is fashionable and elitist, while Oxford Street is popular and affordable. So, while the goods themselves are refined versions of the materials on the docks, Woolf maintains, "it cannot be said that the character of Oxford Street is refined."[58] Woolf describes the assaultive delights of Oxford Street in terms of its brassy and impermanent buildings and the poignancy of those who frequent it. The buildings contrast with the solidity and implacability of the Victorian structures, where the cacophony and variation of Oxford Street is not possible. She writes first in the denizens' voices, then interprets the voices this way:

> All are tense, all are real, all are urged out of their speakers by the pressures of making a living, finding a bed, somehow keeping afloat on the bounding, careless, remorseless tide of the street. And even a moralist…must allow that this gaudy, bustling, vulgar street reminds us that life is a struggle; that all building is perishable; that all display is vanity; from which we may conclude—but…it is vain to try to come to a conclusion in Oxford Street.[59]

In her first essay, the ambivalence which haunts her narrative comes from what she sees: the docks and the ships are placed in a London framework of international and imperial trade and capitalism. In this essay, ambivalence derives from the multiple voices of the London middle class and poverty-stricken, from the seller and the buyer, from the business man and the prostitute, all trying to participate in buying the things they need and desire. It also stems from the juxtaposition of the "tense" voices and the "gaudy, bustling, vulgar" street which seems a bit overwhelming but cheerful. Oxford Street itself—because of its gaudy

impermanence—makes all of these positions and predicaments possible, but it is not the place itself that creates the conditions of the people and their ambivalence; rather, it is the larger scheme, the distance separating the docks and the finished, saleable products, the distance between who shops at Bond Street and who shops at Oxford Street, between crudity and refinement.

The ambivalence in both essays stems from conflicting points of view about trade: one is the sheer pleasure and necessity of goods; the other is the understanding that the wealth of individuals and nations constructs unequal power relations, unequal access to both pleasurable and necessary commodities. Woolf indicts neither the pleasure of commercial enterprise nor the necessity; her ambivalent stance instead reflects the role of commerce in the British Empire, the role of consumerism in London, the role of England in the colonies as well as an attempt to understand the multiple experiences of the city. It is also, in the end, a transformative kind of ambivalence: by simple, keen observation of separable, material categories and setting down some of the implications of what she sees without coming to a resolution, Woolf creates open-ended possibilities. Her ambivalence about Parliament is qualitatively different, and stems less from a sense of multiple experiences which seem to require that multiplicity in order to render them meaningful (and thus cannot conclude, like the essay on Oxford Street) and more from a sense that history is immutable, and although it is referenced in the landscape—in the buildings and in the monuments as well as in the people—its immutability renders it personally inaccessible. Thus, although she takes pride in English history, she also records a disappointment in its impermeability, in its persistent demands on the city, the country, and the citizens.

Citing "Gladstone, Granville, Lord John Russell,"[60] Woolf begins "This is the House of Commons" with the statues outside it. These men, famous and powerful—and, notably, all but Gladstone belong to the House of Lords—are juxtaposed against the present and bustling activity of the House of Commons. Describing the House as "untidy," and "as ugly as any other moderate-sized public hall,"[61] she compares the living MPs to birds:

> Dipping and rising, moving and settling, the Commons remind one of a flock of birds settling on a stretch of ploughed land. They never alight for more than a few minutes….And from the flock rises the gabbling, the cawing, the croaking of a flock of birds, disputing merrily and with occasion vivacity over some seed, worm, or buried grain. One has to say to oneself severely, "But this is the House of Commons. Here the destinies of the world are altered. Here Gladstone fought, and Palmerston and Disraeli. It is by these men that we are governed. We obey their order every day of the year. Our purses are at their mercy. They decide how fast we shall drive our cars in Hyde Park; also whether we shall have war and peace." But we have to remind ourselves; for to look at they do not differ much from other people.[62]

In this essay, as in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia Woolf questions the prospect that monuments to the past fully reflect actual histories; what is monumentalized is historical; what falls away is human. By juxtaposing the activities of the untidy, even somewhat unruly, Members of Parliament—and comparing them, albeit with good humor—to a feeding frenzy of a flock of birds, Woolf suggests that the present government, in the actual House, in Westminster, is different from its representation in the architecture of London. These materials—these

bodies and buildings—may in fact become the materials of history, but while they are alive in the present, they do not inspire awe or reverence. As she asks later in the essay,

> But how, one asks, remembering Parliament Square, are any of these competent, well-groomed gentleman going to turn into statues? For Gladstone, for Pitt, or for Palmerston even, the transition was perfectly easy. But look at Mr. Baldwin…how is he going to mount a plinth and wrap himself dangerously in a towel of black marble?[63]

Woolf's concern is that these Parliamentary men have "normal" features, while the men who are turned into statues have "abnormal" features. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, also says a similar thing about the Prime Minister (who, in 1924, would have been either Stanley Baldwin or Ramsey MacDonald; they both held office that year). Clarissa, seeing the Prime Minister at her party, thinks "One couldn't laugh at him. He looked so ordinary…poor chap, all rigged up in lace....He tried to look like somebody. It was amusing to watch."[64] In both instances, Woolf uses an interesting pair of oppositional adjectives (abnormal/normal, ordinary/somebody); the opposition privileges the average, and also betrays skepticism about the supposed greatness of the exceptional. While she explains that Ramsey MacDonald—the Prime Minister, and, like Gladstone, elected from the House of Commons[65]—could probably fit the bill, she also says that the "abnormal man would be pecked to death by all these sparrows."[66] Calling attention to this distinct lack of reverence in the present and comparing it to an imagined past, Woolf demonstrates that she finds such dichotomies, and therefore such ambivalence, to be structural. It is in the juxtaposition of the city's past and its present, in the architectural commemorations and the people who eat lunch next to them or walk

past them. Even as the present can sometimes ignore the past, the monuments of and to the past are called upon to create its ethos and build a national identity. Ambivalence is similarly present in the multiplicity of experiences that come from the visible exchange of goods along Oxford and Bond Streets. These two sites are amplified in *Mrs. Dalloway*, juxtaposed with one another to construct Westminster as a site of ambivalence.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the end of "This is the House of Commons" is left largely unresolved. First, Woolf writes that monuments to the current MPs will become increasing "monolithic" and "featureless" because the men are also bland. She continues:

> Wit, invective, passion, are no longer called for. Mr. MacDonald is addressing not the small separate ears of his audience in the House of Commons, but men and women in factories, in shops, in farms on the veldt, in Indian villages. He is speaking to all men everywhere, not to us sitting here.[67]

This is as much an indictment of MacDonald as it is of the global taking precedence over the local, although this evidence does bolster my argument about the ambivalence inherent in London during the interwar years as uncomfortably participating in both. MacDonald at the time of this essay was PM for a second term, and heading a "National Government" which persisted into the 1940s under both Stanley Baldwin (the "Mr. Baldwin" Woolf mentioned earlier) and Neville Chamberlain. Ostensibly intended to form a governmental coalition of all parties, the enterprise put more Conservatives in office than anything else, and MacDonald was expelled from the Labor Party for his endeavor. Most importantly, the National Government was formed in response to the extreme conditions of poverty in England after

the war and the 1929 stock market crash, an ineffective response to a dire problem. In her closing sentences of this 1930s essay, Woolf reflects a deep ambivalence about both the present and the future of London:

> [L]et us give up making statues and inscribing them with impossible virtues. Let us see whether democracy which makes halls cannot surpass the aristocracy that makes statues. But there are still innumerable policemen. . . . And must we not admit a distinct tendency in our corrupt mind soaked with habit to stop and think: "Here stood King Charles when they sentenced him to death; here the Earl of Essex and Guy Fawkes; and Sir Thomas More."...So let us hope that democracy will come, but only a hundred years hence, when we are beneath the grass, or that by some stupendous stroke of genius both will be combined, the vast hall and the small, the particular, the individual human being.[68]

With these closing lines, Woolf seems unsure about what she would prefer: the city monuments—its statues and public buildings and men to guard them—do seem to have an important social function, do seem to reflect a national history which, even if only by force of habit, speaks to its citizens. But the present members of Parliament can't or don't speak to them; they speak to people much farther afield than the spectators and participants in the House. And so she wishes for an end to the civic and political structures, but not in her lifetime. Woolf's ambivalence is a reaction to the landscape, to the materials and their histories as much as it is a reaction borne of the multiple voices in these essays. It is also a powerful observation she makes, that these contradictory things exist in the landscape and

affect the people within it: her irresolution, while sometimes frustrating or even mystifying, emphasizes her own ambivalence and makes it a critical component of experiencing Westminster in the interwar years.

One of the underlying ambivalences in London during the interwar years involves finances. After the Great War, England was heavily in debt, which affected the City of London as the imperial and financial capital. This debt remained largely invisible, however. As Francis Sheppard points out, the British Empire Exhibition in Wembley (1924-25), coincidental with the publication of *Mrs. Dalloway*, successfully promoted imperial trade. Most of the foreign investments had been sold to pay off debts accrued during the war, but

> the metropolitan Establishment retained its domestic control of economic life, and despite the fall of invisible earnings was not submerged by manufacturing's rising share of national output. More of this industrial output was of course concentrated in the South-East, particularly in the new consumer-goods-oriented factory ring with in a 20-mile radius of Central London. The City was getting more effective in the financing of industry, mergers were producing larger companies [and]….the ability of the gentlemanly capitalists of London to adapt and survive was indeed remarkable.[69]

Westminster is an important narrative site in *Mrs. Dalloway* because the characters' movements in the city—generated by domestic and civic business, shopping and politics, and therefore governed by the spatialized economic structure outlined above—serve to locate the ambivalence I noted in *The London Scene* essays within a slightly different

context. In *The London Scene*, places are foregrounded as sites of ambivalence, but in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the characters' ambivalence, arising from their geographic and temporal placement, serve to connect the domestic and political. *Mrs. Dalloway* seeks to construct a new national narrative that inserts multiple, everyday experiences into the landscape alongside, and providing counterpoint and contradiction to, the monumental structures of political national identities. Yet even if that is Woolf's project, what emerges is the *need* for a new national narrative, a new way of inhabiting London, which is more fully accommodating of people's experiences of it. That new narrative is uncertainly envisioned at the end of *Mrs. Dalloway*, and what abides is the irresolution. As Squier argues, the social construction of the city—along gender, racial, and economic lines—restricts acceptable forms of movement for some people. Thus Woolf takes to the streets, emphasizing the role of commerce as a crucial connecting point between people and between people and national policies. In the novel, this is especially observable in the cross-sections of people on the street and the communally experienced, if uncertainly understood, advertisements in the sky. By extending connections between London's past and its present across multiple voices and experiences, and by steeping it in her keen descriptions and knowledge of the city, Woolf constructs a narrative of the city that reflects a deep reaction, a collective reaction, to the inherent tensions of interwar London.

The dual nature of London, especially as it is felt in the aftereffects of war, the intermediary state in between war and peace—is evident in the similarly dual stances which show up in *Mrs. Dalloway* as well as circulate—albeit in necessarily different forms than the fictional work—in the Parliamentary debates from the same year that *Mrs. Dalloway* was

published. The debates reflect a keen desire to define the city through its social movements, but the debating points return to whether the organizing influence should be constructed from a global point of view or a local one. I chose to consider the debates in the House of Lords in part because Woolf makes a distinction between the aristocracy and democracy in "This is the House of Commons." The House of Commons, which is democratically elected, introduces most of the legislation. Seats in the House of Lords are appointed or inherited; members have the power to block legislation, but that power has been reduced to two years since the passing of the Parliament Act of 1902. The debates in the House of Lords then, are rendered all the more multiple by their power only to block, not introduce, legislation. The multiple voices of the Parliamentary debates counterpoint the multiple voices in Woolf's novel, and also serve, once again, to amplify the ambivalence inherent in the structure of the city in both of these narratives.

An uncomfortable, if not entirely unwelcome, change in policy occurred in the political landscape of early 1920s London. In 1923, the Conservative government was subjected to a surprisingly contested general election, and by 1924 the first Labor government was in office. The process of this change gave rise to a series of debates—within Parliament, certainly, but also in newspapers and drawing rooms—about the role socialism would play in English government, an especially important question in London, a city that was simultaneously an urban center with neighboring boroughs, a national capital, and an imperial city. And although the war had been over for five years, a number of uncertainties about nationhood, about imperialism, and about international relations held sway, again, both within and without governmental institutions.

Although it is a commonplace to talk about the "interwar years" of London, and frequently a means of describing Woolf's oeuvre, it also seems important to emphasize that the interwar years are only categorized that way retrospectively. *Mrs. Dalloway* and the *London Scene* essays were post-war treatments of London before they became "inter-war." In my introduction, I argued that London after the 2005 subway bombings became characterized by a sense of vulnerability. That vulnerability stems as much from the knowledge and fear that we live in a time of terrorism, that the state of affairs renders the very architecture of the city vulnerable to unforeseen small-scale attacks; that the morale and urban fabric of the city seems far less likely to be destroyed by a fullscale attack than undermined in small bursts of destruction. In *Mrs. Dalloway* and *The London Scene* essays, vulnerability is identified with ambivalence both because irresolution involves openness to uncertainty and because of a lingering, subtle sense of threat. London's post-or-interwar years, as described by Woolf, contains a sense of having lived through devastation that touched its people and institutions, but not the infrastructure of the city, just its people and institutions.[70] The records of the debates, for instance, are strewn with topics like aviation and defense, reparation for "ex-enemy aliens," the importance of the League of Nations to help prevent another war, and assistance for the psychologically and physically injured. The sense of urgency hasn't quite vanished despite these topics, but the damage remains largely invisible. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf frames the topic this way, early on:

> The War was over, except for someone like Mrs. Foxcroft at the Embassy last night eating her heart out because that nice boy was killed and now the old Manor House must go to a cousin; or Lady Bexborough who opened a

> bazaar, they said, with the telegram in her hand, John, her favorite, killed; but it was over; thank Heaven—over.[71]

Thus the war's terrible consequences remain intermixed with the daily business of the Parliament and the people; in *Mrs. Dalloway*, what "can't be accounted for by law, by politics"[72] is all made visible in Bond Street. What would ordinarily remain invisible in the city become salient features of a shopping trip; Clarissa's quest for commercial goods becomes a way into the lives of others. Her delight, her love of "life; London; this moment in June,"[73] all well up out of her as she shops in Bond Street, an experience which makes her "part of people she had never met."[74] The emancipatory experience of shopping is tied to pleasures of inspecting goods and seeing and meeting people, but even on the streets, the effects of war and politics intervene. The difficulty of living with the twin senses of safety and danger, the sensation of ambivalence embedded in the convenience of the term "interwar," makes itself known in both of Woolf's narratives.

National Subjects

In *Virginia Woolf and London*, Susan Merill Squier argues that *Mrs. Dalloway* examines "the roots of war and sexual oppression in the sexually polarized society of early modern London" and that Woolf investigates the "relationship between women's domestic role and men's public role to the question of the origins of war."[75] For Squier, *Mrs. Dalloway* explores the relationship between public and private spheres of influence using the urban setting of London, one day in June, 1923—five years after the end of the Great War—as its primary means of establishing the dualities implicit in these gendered realms. While

Squier's smart essay correctly identifies many of the components of the social critiques in *Mrs. Dalloway*, she does not address how these representations of the city—more particularly, Westminster—and the characters who traverse its parks and homes and streets reflect the ambiguities borne of living with (and living outside of) interwar constructions and contradictions of national civic identities. Each of the characters perceives the city in unique—but related—ways; each demonstrates a particular kind of ambivalence to his or her experiences, which serves to unify the novel and critique the institutional forces at work in London in 1923 and 1924. The novel thus reflects an underlying confusion about civic and national identity as well as exposes vulnerability in the face of uncertain registers of identity.

Woolf's novel takes up this sensation of ambivalence—which is indeed clearly and keenly *felt* by the characters—in ways that call into question the relationship between the individual and the national; thus this ambivalence has a political component and force. The experience of the city in *Mrs. Dalloway*—a multiple set of experiences, to be sure—chronicles the ways individuals traverse the same terrain, and the ways certain identities form affiliations with one another while others separate each from another. In this section, I explore the relationship between the personal and the national—about England, about Britishness—as they come together in public and private spaces in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Mrs. Dalloway is framed in terms of one day in Clarissa's life and shell-shocked Septimus's death; although the two never meet—and it's important that they don't meet, even as they traverse the same cityscape—they are connected by the spaces they inhabit (or in Septimus's case, haunt). Thus, although Clarissa is distanced from war violence in the same way that the London landscape remains physically intact, war and its effects are written

into London's structure, embodied literally in the surviving citizens and figuratively in the war memorials. The war's barely visible ongoing effects,[76] which the monumental structures seem to disavow, and its irresolution—at least in the mid-1920s, as reparations were still being made and the League of Nations formed—is underscored by Septimus's shadowing of Clarissa's path and by her party.

At the end of *Mrs. Dalloway*, Lady Bradshaw and Sir William, who is Septimus's doctor, arrive at the party. Lady Bradshaw explains to Clarissa that they are late because "a young man (that is what Sir William is telling Mr. Dalloway) had killed himself. He had been in the army."[77] Clarissa responds sympathetically, even empathically, thinking, "He had thrown himself out the window. Up had flashed the ground; through him, blundering, bruising, went the rusty spikes."[78] She calls his death a "defiance,"[79] a phrase which emphasizes her intuitive understanding of how Septimus dies.

I read Septimus's death as a deliberate parody of the death of men who, in the nationalistic phrasing, gave their lives for their country. Septimus throws himself out of the window ostensibly because he can't have anything more to do with either Doctor Holmes or Doctor Bradshaw, whose contradictory opinions have neither soothed nor healed him. As Holmes comes up the stairs, Septimus looks about for a way to kill himself, and then thinks:

> There remained only the window, the large Bloomsbury-lodging house window, the tiresome, the troublesome, and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out….(He sat on the sill). But he would wait until the very last moment. He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot. Only human beings—what did *they* want? Coming

> down the staircase opposite an old man stopped and stared at him. Holmes was at the door. "I'll give it to you!" he cried, and flung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs. Filmer's area railings.[80]

The "it" Septimus gives seems to be his life, which he does not want to lose. His defiance seems to be dual: he gives up his life, but he doesn't give it up on the battlefield, he gives it up in Bloomsbury. When Clarissa hears about Septimus and thinks that "[s]omehow it was her disaster, her disgrace,"[81] she seems to be speaking back to this very scene, suggesting that his London death and his life as a soldier are both her disaster and her disgrace. Clarissa ultimately understands Septimus's death only with the help of Big Ben:

> The young man had killed himself; but she did not pity him; with the clock striking the hour, one, two, three, she did not pity him, with all this going on…She felt somehow very like him—the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away. The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. He made her feel the beauty; made her feel the fun.[82]

Clarissa perceives Septimus's shell-shocked life and suicide as a necessary fact of post-war life, but before Big Ben's chimes ring, she feels personal shame at not being able to live up to the sacrifice. It is only after they ring, that Clarissa can put his Westminster, local death in a national context, a context symbolized by the bell atop the Houses of Parliament. It's an uneasy solution—another instance of narrative irresolution and ambivalence—but the beauty and fun she can feel and ascribe to Septimus's largely invisible contribution to her life are possible only if the war and its consequences somehow make sense for the nation. Just as

she does in *The London Scene*, Woolf imposes the personal, private, domestic—home—on a nationalized and metropolitan London. Clarissa feels sympathy, shame, and, finally, happiness as she moves from the party to her bedroom and opens the windows to Big Ben's sounds. Her vulnerability—her ability to both have and express each of these emotions—betrays another kind of irresolution: the irresolution of conflicting emotions which are made relevant to the larger social body through Big Ben. Thus, ambivalence arises in the interstices of the architectural and societal; it shows up in the characters' social interactions with space in Woolf and in the debates, and in the ways spaces are inhabited or used by those who were not envisioned as being present in them.

Un-Englishness

In the preceding sections of this chapter, I suggested that the ambivalence Woolf constructs and emphasizes in *Mrs. Dalloway* (and indeed, as Sarker argues, throughout her *oeuvre*)[83] also weaves through the debates about how London and its citizens should be represented by and within Parliament. In Parliament, of course, the uncertainties are meant to resolve themselves (or perhaps either never appear or just disappear) through public policy; in the fictional representation of the city, the ambivalence of interwar existence can remain unresolved, which is perhaps why they continue to resonate.

The irresolution of interwar life is strikingly clear in *Mrs. Dalloway* through the presence of foreigners in the streets of Westminster. In the debates, Englishness is both taken for granted and defined against who is an alien, an ex-enemy alien, or belonging to a Dominion or Colony. None of these figures are imagined in the English landscape but are

in an indefinite elsewhere; bringing them into the daily life of London is important because their visibility is crucial to understanding the terms under which English identity was constructed.[84] They appear in the debates in geographic terms of nationalized "Others," with headings like "India" or "Ex-Enemy Aliens." Most of these headings concern prospective de-colonization in India and Ireland and the after-effects of the Great War in Europe and Russia.[85]

The arrangements for ex-enemy aliens—made in 1922 and 1923 as part of the Versailles Treaty—divested them of their property as part of a larger financial agreement between the two countries. Although objections about these agreements were raised in the Parliamentary debates, on behalf of, for instance, a British woman living in Germany who was left penniless, no objections were made on behalf of German nationals living in England. Not surprisingly, the debates are largely about German debt to British creditors and recouping the loss.[86] Woolf wrote about learning about reparations in her diary: "the facts come in, & I can't deal with them."[87] Sarker points out that Woolf cannot "deal" with them because

> [s]uch facts create the space of the nation as a transparent medium for masculinist cartography to impose a particular version of history. While they attempt to present Englishness "as it is," these facts actually produce a particular Englishness that nationals, like Woolf, and "aliens," such as England's colonial subjects, expose as unnatural.[88]

Sarker argues that Woolf's materiality, her construction of a London in which aliens and colonial subject are visible and viable, works to counter this idea of Englishness. Peter,

Rezia, and Miss Kilman are all not-quite-English and their material bodies disrupt Westminster in much the same way that the effects of war do.

As Sarker points out, anti-German sentiment ran high in England throughout the interwar years, and Miss Kilman makes that history visible. It is no wonder that Clarissa does not like her; it is also no wonder that Clarissa is ambivalent and uncertain both about the degree and the source of that dislike. Within the juxtapositions of the local and the international, the difficulties of inhabiting Westminster spaces are embodied in these not-quite-English characters. Before Miss Kilman appears in the novel, Clarissa describes her in some detail:

> …for Miss Kilman would do anything for Russians, starved herself for the Austrians, but in private inflicted positive torture, so insensitive was she, dressed in a green mackintosh coat. Year in year out she wore that coat; she perspired; she was never in the room five minutes without making you feel her superiority, your inferiority; how poor she was; how rich you were; how she lived in a slum without a cushion or a bed or a rug or whatever it might be, all her soul rusted with that grievance sticking in it, her dismissal from school during the War—poor embittered unfortunate creature! For it was not her one hated but the idea of her, which undoubtedly had gathered in to itself a great deal that was not Miss Kilman, had become one of those specters with which one battles in the night.[89]

The markers of a particular kind of Englishness are enlisted, this time in terms of absence: an unattractive coat (a lack of style), drawing attention to class and economic disparities (no

manners and insufficient financial means), and "grievances" which stem from the war, but which also seem distinct from the "grief" of Mrs. Foxcroft or Lady Bexborough, grief felt by the definitively English which has also lived beyond the war (no cultural continuity). As a woman who "reads history" and knows enough about international affairs to act on behalf of Austrians and Russians, Miss Kilman stands in contrast to Clarissa and her Englishness (she who doesn't know Armenians from Albanians). Giving Miss Kilman the power to read history, the power to have made history, is to be ambivalent about her. Still, as Clarissa points out at the end of the passage, if the world were different, "she would have loved Miss Kilman!"[90] For Woolf, history is an inherently masculine project, one symbolized by Big Ben and made material in the history makers in the Houses of Parliament and in the immutable statues of Englishmen, of Englishness. To write her into the landscape *is* to make London a bit different; it constructs an affective history that accommodates a broader range of experience than either Parliament or history can.

Ambivalence is, however, a much more powerful force in *Mrs. Dalloway* than the affirmative progression I indicated in the last paragraph. As Sarker notes in her discussion of *The London Scene*, "this city, in Woolf's time, had already become a signpost on the journey in which new Englishnesses were being born and which do not gain a place in Woolf's annals."[91] The odd reactions of Peter Walsh to London and his relationship to the city confirm this idea. While *The London Scene* and *Mrs. Dalloway* both use space to emphasize a felt understanding of national identity, and while both works also use multiple voices and characters in everyday circumstances to circumvent totalizing narratives about Englishness and history, the landscape Woolf writes cannot fully accommodate Peter Walsh.

He is not very much at home in London, despite his claims to the contrary. As he walks toward Regent's Park through Trafalgar Square, he sees himself:

> And there he was, this fortunate man, himself, reflected in the plate-glass window of a motor-car manufacturer in Victoria Street. All India lay behind him: plains, mountains; epidemics of cholera; a district twice as big as Ireland; decisions he had come to alone—he, Peter Walsh...had invented the plough in his district, had ordered wheel-barrows from England, but the coolies wouldn't use them.[92]

Sarker's larger claim about *The London Scene,* that Virginia Woolf's conceptions and critiques of race ultimately must rest on the very imperial and national constructions she contests, is equally true here. These lines express Peter's Anglo-Indianness, in the way he looks in a shop-window and sees India stretched out behind him. It's not a romantic view of India, what with the frustrations and illness, but it is a flat one, reflected from the imperial center back to the colony. Similarly, his difficulties with inhabiting the dichotomy set up for him by Woolf are also unrewarding and flat—although the juxtaposition of fortune and misery, civilization and indolence, are common ways of expressing multiple ethnic and national identities for the time, and one that also inhabits Bowen's London, in the form of Anglo-Irishness, as I discuss in Chapter Two.

Peter's status as an informed outsider allows him to see the materials of English identity, "butlers, tawny chow dogs, halls laid in black and white lozenges with white blinds blowing" as a "splendid achievement."[93] His attitude toward these markers of Englishness is ambivalent: he has "moments of pride in England; in butlers; chow dogs; girls in their

security,"[94] although he also calls them "ridiculous." His reaction to these things, as an observer, rather than a participant, is in part a negotiation of his Anglo-Indian history and heritage. The opposition between "splendid" and "ridiculous" functions analogously to the oppositions in "This is the House of Commons;" they amplify the sensation of ambivalence. The two crucial differences are that Peter sees these dichotomies in the bodies in the landscape, rather than the monuments, and that Peter is Anglo-Indian and thus they should be read within that ambivalent identifier. As Sarker argues, the very flexibility of the markers of Englishness at the hands of participants and observers alike are the way Woolf "reminds…readers that the *meaning* of the history and principles of a nation reside in a human geography."[95] For Peter Walsh, who sidesteps the monuments of Trafalgar Square, pausing only to recall his boyhood hero-worship of Lord Gordon as he passes his statue[96] and to register the unemployed demonstrating and the young soldiers marching, the "principles of a nation" do indeed reside in the London bodies. While he acknowledges feeling "fortunate" and "admiring," he also acknowledges that he can participate only partly in the principles of the nation as he is only partly English.

The history of partly-English bodies—such as Peter's—residing in England cannot be taken up in Woolf's novel because of her difficulties separating the "facts" from the national narrative about the war and its effects, about India and the British Empire. Woolf can only label the bodies, not construct compelling, knowledgeable histories about them. The divide between the all-English and the partly-English is deep in this novel, and Woolf can only gesture towards the emotional histories she does not fully apprehend. While these configurations of identity do leave much to be desired, as Sarker argues, they are

provocatively indicative of the ambivalence at the heart of the empire and in between two world wars. Woolf's novel sketches out how Westminster politics affect not just the everyday experiences of British citizens but also the urban architecture and structure. These effects, not surprisingly, are unevenly recognized, unevenly felt—sometimes across the obvious markers of difference like race, gender and class, but also across more diffuse personality traits and reserves. In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the effects of imperial policies are marked by Big Ben's chimes.

Big Ben

Big Ben's chimes, as I have suggested, serve to unify the novel by tolling out the histories circulating almost imperceptibly throughout *Mrs. Dalloway*. In fact, Big Ben serves as a cue that the novel is concerned with the ambivalent relationship between institutional social forces and private ones. That ambivalence, as I have suggested, is a spatial problem: when one sees things on a global scale, the individual constitutive parts dissolve; Woolf's dissolving leaden circles serve to highlight that problem by showing the individual parts on a local scale and eschewing the global. In the end, however, reversing it does not resolve the ambivalence; it just highlights it.

Big Ben is one of the most recognizable icons of a knowable, tourist-friendly London. Its chimes were first broadcast on the BBC on December 31, 1923, and subsequently broadcast (in 1932) through the first Empire link-up; thus, in the view of one Big Ben enthusiast, it unified the Empire "under the symbol of Big Ben—at once homely and majestic."[97] In *Mrs. Dalloway*, its leaden circles equally famously invoke transitions;

mark out the differences between characters, between hours, between points of view, between the external and internal experiences of the city. The aural nature of the chimes' repetitions are, as Kate Flint argues, both "potentially unifying" and "registering a reverse of this process."[98] They serve to connect experience via shared sensory input, but they also cut off or change the narrative flow in the novel as well as hint at forces beyond the characters' ken and control. In the passage cited below (the first passage in which Big Ben chimes), Clarissa's train of thought ("affected, they said, by influenza")[99] is interrupted by the striking of the bells. The noises emanating from Big Ben, from the heights of the Houses of Parliament, unite the novel by marking out time, but they also serve as sometimes jarring transitions by drawing attention to the hour or half-hour or quarter-hour. They are heard, just as in the "real" London, in conjunction with other city clock chimes, but also overpower them by virtue of ringing first, or more loudly, or by commanding more attention from the characters. They signal an "irrevocable" force, as Clarissa describes it, housed within the governmental buildings of the nation. And Big Ben and its chimes are, in the opening pages of the novel, explicitly connected to Parliament:

> For Heaven only knows why one loves it so, how one sees it so, making it up, building it round one, tumbling it, creating every moment afresh; but the veriest frumps, the most dejected of miseries sitting on doorsteps (drink their downfall) do the same; can't be dealt with, she felt positive, by Acts of Parliament for that very reason; they love life.[100]

Big Ben makes time seem both material and sensational: the physicality of the clock in its tower is referenced in the "leaden circles;" the reverberations also suggest the ways the

sounds permeate bodies and demarcate "irrevocable" time. "Acts of Parliament" are appropriate in this passage because Big Ben is part of the Houses of Parliament; thus the comments about "its" ineffectiveness, and "its" pervasiveness, and "its" importance in the conception of civic Englishness, are as much about the government as they are about how time, the present, is a restrictive force. Acts of Parliament cannot deal with drunkenness, with people, with love; Englishness, it would seem, cannot deal with these specificities either. And yet, in Parliament, bills about public intoxication, about who has which identities and how those identities are or can be supported, about "legitimacy" and marriage are all debated and legislated. Big Ben is thus a material mechanism representing the experiential ambivalence of lives that are prescribed by laws and bills and acts that ultimately cannot successfully address them.

The other clocks in the novel, ringing contrapuntally and belatedly (after Big Ben), emphasize these difficulties, as in this passage about St. Margaret's[101] chimes:

> Ah, said St. Margaret's, like a hostess who comes into her drawing room on the very stroke of the hour and finds her guests already there. I am not late. No, it is precisely half-past eleven, she says. Yet, though she is perfectly right, her voice, being the voice of the hostess, is reluctant to inflict its individuality. Some grief for the past holds it back; some concern for the present.[102]

Here, St. Margaret's rings *against* Big Ben, which is never given this kind of personification; it just continues to weigh in and dissipate through the air. Signaling a different, more diffident approach to people and social and civic life, St. Margaret's bells are feminized and

given a clear, gendered, social role, one concerned with the comfort of guests rather than imposing a structure or an order even while it acknowledges that such structures exist. The appropriate behavior of a hostess, for instance, dictates that, although she has the time right, the guests must not feel at fault for arriving early: comfort is more important than asserting correctness. And even though St. Margaret's in this passage is said to ring the time more correctly and more astutely and more compassionately, given its "grief for the past" and "concern for the present," it is overshadowed and outshouted by the more insistent chimes of Big Ben, which seem to ring regardless of past and present and only acknowledge an emphatic "NOW." They signify the immutable history Woolf's narrated bodies resituate—away from policy- and history-makers and place in a dynamic mercantile present—but the bells continue to ring and effect their lives anyway.

Both the intent of the policy makers and their policies and their actual effects can range from the innocuously ineffective to the grossly mistaken. The bills debated in Parliament in 1923 and 1924 intersect with several scenes in Woolf's novel. For instance, Woolf's famous description of an airplane skywriting an advertisement over Westminster has its counterpoint in Parliamentary proceedings in the forms of discussions about civil aviation and the defense of the newly coined home front. Similarly, Richard Dalloway's view of policemen and Westminster traffic—the latter is an ambient and vital force throughout the novel—when paired with discussions about London traffic and which agencies are, or should be, responsible for managing it, result in a complex discussion about Englishness and local and national identities.

Spatial Networks

Lynn Hollen Lees, writing about the construction of London's networks of electrical power in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, maintains "London was and remains a primate [*sic*] city, whose size is sustained by its position in economic, cultural and political hierarchies."[103] Pointing to maritime customs as a model for the ways electricity and other forms of power—gas, water—move through the city, she argues that the system is inherently designed to reflect the same hierarchies prevalent in the governing bodies. She maintains, for instance, that the civic center of Westminster became a focal point for municipal governing forces in the 1880s: imperialism and consolidation of Parliamentary power coincided with the need for a "centered" local government. Thus, she continues, politicians such as David Lloyd George moved their political lives from the outskirts of London to the civic center of Westminster. The spatial logic of the infrastructure of the city, she contends, follows a similar hierarchical pattern. She writes: "Although the logic of telecommunications permits decentralized flows of information, the planning, maintenance and finance of such networks is resolutely hierarchical. The spinal cords of the British Empire stretched from London to colonial ports and capitals all over the globe."[104] Thus, in June of 1924, when Parliament turned its attention to London traffic patterns, what was at stake was not simply the convenient flow of traffic in neighborhoods, but a much more complex discussion of how to envision the city.

The question of whether to view London traffic as a local issue, to be dealt with by the municipal government (the LCC, or London County Council), or one for the national government became the focus of a fascinating debate in the House of Lords on June 10,

1924. Lord Parmoor—newly chosen Leader of the House of Lords by Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald (himself newly elected)—introduced a bill to deal with London traffic involving the Ministry of Transport. The Ministry of Transport, a national department, seemed equipped to handle the local problems of traffic in the Greater London area, he argued, and proceeded to lay out the duties and difficulties ahead. After explaining his plan, he received vociferous opposition to the plan on several grounds. First, it was argued, the plan itself was counter-intuitive for a Labour government because it used a national office to deal with what Earl Bruxton called a local problem. The difficulty with that position, of course, is that the regulations in London are often Parliamentary concerns, because of the ways the London Council's powers are limited by Parliament and because of the issues of what "counts" as London—ongoing concerns certainly, but also perhaps problems endemic to any city that is simultaneously a local, national and transnational site of governance. Still, Earl Bruxton argues,

> This proposal creates another of those hybrid bodies which have done so much to hamper and weaken the self-government of London, and which, as has been well said, have almost reduced it from the status of responsible government to that of a Crown Colony. I should have thought that the way of dealing with this matter was that, pending, and leading up to, the realization of the ideal of what is called Greater London, you would have had a statutory body consisting of representatives of the London County Council, the City Council, and the neighboring county councils, who would be empowered to carry out these duties.[105]

The Earl's rhetorical strategy, shaming Lord Parmoor and the rest of the House by accusing them of treating London as a Crown Colony, is particularly important not just for its inflammatory comparison, but also because, although clumsily and perhaps violently stated, he clearly argues that what is at stake is London's status not just as a city or even a capital city, but as an imperial center. As a center, it must not be reduced to "Crown Colony status" because that would negate the hierarchical structure. As the Earl of Birkenhead similarly argues in the debates, "The transport system of London, its freedom, its elasticity, is almost an Imperial problem these days, when from all parts of the world visitors come to our shores with messages of high national and Imperial consequence."[106] The question of the role London must play, even regarding traffic, can here be seen to be part of a spatialized hierarchical grid such as the ones Lynn Hollen Lees discusses.

The debates over traffic became even more complex after the author of the bill argued that the reason he put forth this particular plan was because the LCC owned trams: he thought that the best way to keep people off the board who might have financial interests in planning the town's bus system, for instance, would be to put all of the regulatory concerns in a national office. Earl Bruxton rejects this logic, insisting that locals best understand the flow of traffic: those who live and work in the city as a daily part their lives have a strong sense of the influx of cars, omnibuses and pedestrians.

The question of what kind of city London is—local, national, international center—was crucial in these debates, and the ambiguities surrounding the problem come even more clearly into play in *Mrs. Dalloway*, where the overt concern is not with the infrastructure, but with the very people who must use the city in living, organic ways. For Woolf, the same

questions about the civic nature of the city raise a complementary concern with national identities, except in the novel, the traffic of Westminster is not a problem to be solved, just an experience to be had, although in the novel that experience also plays directly into experiences of national pride.

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, the communal sight of a chauffeured car triggers sentiments of nationalism in most of the passers-by. This scene serves not only to connect the characters to one another—the car backfires like "a pistol shot,"[107] a metallic metaphor which recalls the war, and the narrative jumps into Septimus Smith's thoughts—but also to connect the entire street scene to the people, who all notice the car. As Rezia sees the car, she worries about people noticing, seeing not the car but Septimus's startled reaction: "people, she thought...the English people with their children and their horses and their clothes, which she admired in a way; but they were 'people' now, because Septimus had said, 'I will kill myself.'"[108] As Sarker claims about *The London Scene* essays, Woolf can establish race and ethnicity only by marking out an absence of Englishness.[109] Thus the Italian Rezia here establishes herself as not English by her reaction to the car as a secondary response (the English crowd pays attention to the car) and by noticing that the people, who are now "only people," are English, and have different materials—clothes, children and horses—which mark them as such.

As the passage of the car continues, so too do the marks of national identities. As the car slips out of Bond Street, Rezia's mass of undefined people become particular: "tall men…perceived instinctively that greatness was passing;" "Moll Pratt wished the dear boy well (it was the Prince of Wales for certain);" "Mr. Bowley…could be unsealed suddenly,

inappropriately, sentimentally, by this sort of thing."[110] These particular people, with their particular responses to this car, are suddenly united, "grazed," as Woolf writes, by "something very profound."[111]

The sight of imagined royalty—or, if it was the Prime Minister, imagined fame and civic importance—connects these English people on the streets to a narrative about themselves and their country which is larger and longer than themselves. The "profundity" of that identity works both with and against the particular images Woolf conjures—the rich, the poor, the sentimental, the foreign—and creates a sense of ambiguity about the figureheads and symbols of the nation, even as it points to the pervasiveness of the idea. Is the important figure royal or common? Royalty figures into the national imagination differently from other heads of state; the crowds' speculations reflect both points of view. As the car passes, the materials of the street—the bodies, the cars, the statues—are given as much detail and specificity as the thoughts and impressions of the people as the car passes; the reader participates in them all. In this way, Woolf's deliberate irresolution works to construct a felt sense of ambivalence on the street, in the city.

This mixture of local, national, and international is poignantly articulated in Woolf in ways that encourage conscientious, critical analysis how nationhood is inhabited. A kind of sentimentality infuses the speculation about the car, as well as critical thought about the crowds' perceptions. That selfsame attitude—critical, conscious—is present in the House of Lords, but the ambiguities of public policies about traffic are necessarily very different, and the narrative purposes to which these dichotomies are put, while no less instructive, are also very different.

These differences are seen most clearly in Richard Dalloway's reaction to London streets and traffic later in the novel. Unlike Clarissa and the Bond Street crowds, he is not "treated" to an imagined sighting of royalty, but as a representative in the House of Commons, he would in any event be unlikely to react in quite the same ways as those crowds. Instead, he pays attention to the social make-up of the scene before him:

> But it did make his blood boil to see little creatures of five or six crossing Piccadilly alone. The police ought to have stopped the traffic at once. He had no illusions about the London police. Indeed, he was collecting evidence of their malpractices; and these costermongers, not allowed to stand their barrows in the streets; and prostitutes, good Lord, the fault wasn't in them, nor in young men either, but in our detestable social system and so forth; all of which he considered, could be seen considering, as he walked across the Park to tell his wife that he loved her.[112]

As an MP, Richard observes the infrastructure of social life like a bureaucrat, and feels ill-equipped to deal with the messiness and ambiguities of personal relationships. His interest in the streets is abstract, in distinct contrast to the earlier scene, which plays up the crowd's emotional reactions to the materials of English identity (in the form of the car, the chauffeur, the imagined glove or royal body, depending on who is doing the imagining). The prostitutes and their clients that he imagines, for instance, are not given names as many of the earlier crowd are, perhaps because the narrative voice in the earlier passage strongly identifies with Clarissa and her role as gracious hostess, whereas here the narrative voice is a shepherding, paternalistic one, out to safeguard the streets.

Reacting to these streets, Richard feels stultified, useless. While he sometimes believes himself to be too "shy" and too "lazy" to tell Clarissa he loves her, he also describes himself as "pertinacious" and "dogged," these last two in terms of his persistence in fighting for social justice. The idea that the streets can somehow stand in for a social justice, in the context of the novel and even in the context of the Parliamentary debates, seems overblown and perhaps too reductive of the ways people actually live in the city, in the world. In a move complementing Richard Dalloway's stance, Earl Bruxton offers an anecdote about British police officers. He says:

> I remember that Mr. Choate, at one time the American Ambassador…was asked, as usual, what he thought of England and the English. He said that he had not much to say about that; that they seemed on the whole pretty much the same as the Americans; but that the one thing he noticed which distinguished England from every other country was the white-gloved hand of the policeman. There, he said, without any physical force or arms, with nothing but moral force behind him, the policeman, by the mere holding up of his hand, would stop the Duke or the costermonger. That showed, at all events, he said, that the character of the British was law-abiding.[113]

The equation here—a "Duke" and a "costermonger" are, by virtue of national heritage, equally law-abiding—is perhaps a holdover from nineteenth-century ideals about the virtuous poor, but what is most interesting is that Richard Dalloway, the fictional MP, and Earl Bruxton, the historical Lord, approach the streets in the same abstract way: the people on them need laws to govern them; they need the same laws applied in the same ways, not as

a matter of practicality, but as a matter of character. Richard Dalloway imagines himself a "champion of the downtrodden" in much the same way that Earl Bruxton does, and both of them imagine themselves as active participants in the national good. The streets of Westminster become the grounds for establishing not just traffic regulations, but traffic regulations which are built on a concept of national identity and civic responsibilities.

In much the same way that the streets of Westminster can be seen as a spatialized network of national hierarchies in *Mrs. Dalloway* and in the standing parliaments of 1923 and 1924, so too can civil air space. In the novel, attention to the motor car fades as it turns into the palace and the noise of an airplane is heard overhead. Airplanes overhead London in 1923 were still something of a novelty: there were commercial planes, certainly, but few enough that they were out of the ordinary. The sky-writing airplane becomes a spectacle in the novel: it is seen by several characters, all of whom know it is an advertisement, but there is little agreement either about the letters the plane writes in the sky or about what precisely is being advertised. Its message is nonetheless "a mission of the greatest importance which would never be revealed, and yet certainly so it was—a mission of the greatest importance."[114] What registers is the experience of seeing and hearing the airplane, and acknowledging that it has some "message" even if the message itself is obscure. In this way, the novel constructs a shared experience, although how that experience is interpreted is largely up for grabs. The lack of consensus over the plane's message is counterpointed in by two other assertions: that the sound it makes "bored ominously in the ear of the crowd" and that it was on a mission. The threatening, ominous nature of the noise could certainly be from the loudness of the sound, but many of the sudden (and automated) noises in the novel

are attached to pseudo-military sounds.[115] The dual notion of the airplane as a local phenomenon—hawking wares—and an international one—on an important mission—resonates with discussions about civil aviation in the House of Lords.

In 1923 and 1924, the House of Lords conducted several debates about airplanes. For instance, the effect of skywriting airplanes on the civic landscape was discussed at length, as the second clause of a bill dealing, as the Earl of Crawford phrased it, "mainly with the disfigurement of the country."[116] Perhaps surprisingly, this particular clause was uncontested until a second reading a week later, when Lord Southwark, a representative of the Air Ministry, made the argument that banning or curtailing skywriting advertisements could harm the air defense of the country. He argued that aviation in general captures the public imagination, and that advertisements—like the one in *Mrs. Dalloway*—could spark enough interest to provide a civilian reserve of pilots. Thus fears of "disfigurement of the country"—and here, England is clearly being invoked as a civic symbol—confront its need to be defended.

In a later reading of the bill, Lord Newton rightly points out that "the Air Ministry took up what I can only describe as the extraordinary attitude that…the whole future of aviation would be in danger."[117] Despite this acknowledgment of the exaggerated nature of the claim, the second clause of the bill was not included until further discussion and revision took place—and in fact Lord Thomson, the head of the Ministry of Air, was asked to put in his opinions. The question of civil aviation came up again, in a discussion of the air force: in this case, the debates are about how many military airplanes are needed to protect civil air space in times of peace and whether building airplanes in a time of peace would escalate

armaments in other countries. The difficulties of balancing the local with national, the economic with the military, even in Parliament, with its emphasis on England's status as a country, as an imperial force, resonate with the ambivalence in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

The threat of violence in the interwar years lends itself to an ambivalent stance because the scale of the loss from the Great War was so hard to bear and because, for vulnerable Londoners, the losses found there way unevenly into an undamaged landscape. The irresolution I've chronicled in *Mrs. Dalloway* does add up to an emotional understanding of space: ambivalence is constructed in the narrative through reactions to the landscape which are echoed in the Parliamentary debates. Woolf's specific ways of highlighting ambivalence through the multiple perspectives—insofar as she was capable of marking her fictional landscape—suggest that no resolution is possible when violent histories are so close to the present. The marks of the past in the buildings and protocols of the present city cannot yet resolve the ambivalence. In *Mrs. Dalloway,* much of Westminster is an architectural testament to a unified and imperial London. In 1953, Elizabeth Bowen writes of interwar literature:

> It did not finally diagnose the modern uneasiness—dislocation. Dorothy Richardson (still owed full recognition) and Virginia Woolf did best, in their stress on the interplay between consciousness and the exterior world; but these two delicate novelists of the sense cannot be called, in their last implication, tragic. The salutary value of the exterior, the comfortable sanity of the concrete came to be realized only when the approach of the Second World War forced one to envisage wholesale destruction. The obliteration of

> man's surroundings, streets and houses, tables and chairs sent up, for him, their psychological worth. Up to now, consciousness had been a sheltered product: its interest *as* consciousness diminished now that, at any moment, the physical shelter could be gone.[118]

Bowen's comments are instructive in light of the argument made in this chapter: that ambivalence was a crucial London sensation in the aftermath of World War One, and that it becomes evident in narrated London spaces. Bowen seems to imply that it is only with the destruction of houses that new experiences and a new national character could come from London life. While I'm not sure I agree with her that Woolf could not fully appreciate the psychological or emotional worth of the material world, I do agree with her that the bombing of London brought with it a new set of sensations. The question of to what degree the exterior landscape can be thought of as "salutary" is taken up in the next chapter, as I examine the ways the destruction of London's material life—its public architecture and private homes— changed experiences of intimacy. Vulnerability is implicit in intimate exchanges, and it is also a crucial identifying sensation of World War Two London.

Chapter Two

Comfort Zones: Intimacy in World War II London

In my introduction, I point out that one of the prevailing cultural memories of London in World War II is that Londoners suffered much and complained little under very grim circumstances. The British "stiff upper lip" was evoked in July 2005 as part of a tradition of how to live in a besieged city. The sensation recorded then, I argue, was vulnerability. In 1940, however, although vulnerability and threats of attack were common fears and sensations, most narratives about London focused not on how vulnerable the city and its citizens were but how well they bore up, banded together, and made the best of things. That impression seems by all accounts to be more accurate than not, as Angus Calder and others have pointed out. If life in London between the wars can be characterized as ambivalent, narratives of London during and after the blitz of 1940 can only be characterized as over-determined.

The news of war, as told in speeches by Winston Churchill and propaganda broadcasts on the BBC, as written in the newspapers and displayed on posters on the streets, had the common purpose of keeping up morale. Furthermore, the attitude of forbearance was specifically cultivated as forbearance *for the Empire*. Without London, without the heart, the Empire would crumble, and while this consequence was probably not foremost in the minds of Londoners, most accounts register a nationalistic pride for London's stoicism that accords with that view. As historian Keith Jeffrey argues, the "Second World War marked the greatest and the ultimate 'revival' of the British Empire. In the short term, at

least, the impact of war did much to strengthen the Imperial system. The accession of that ardent imperialist, Winston Churchill, to the British premiership in May 1940 meant that the war effort was emphatically defined in Imperial terms."[119]

Winston Churchill had a long history of radio addresses with the BBC, dating back to 1924 (coincidentally, the year *Mrs. Dalloway* was published). Between 1929 and 1939, Churchill was out of favor with the BBC and with the Houses of Parliament, and made public broadcasts only eleven times. After 1939, his warnings about Hitler were increasingly noticed and popularly accepted, although, as historian D.J. Wenden phrases it "he seemed…an outdated figure from a different class and a different era, associated with lost causes, Gallipoli, anti-Bolshevism, India and misjudgment over the abdication."[120] Still, during the war—and especially during the blitz—he made a startling transformation, largely by appealing to public opinion through radio and film. As Wendon argues,

> He could speak personally with only a limited number of men and women in the street. Newreel and documentary footage enabled almost all to feel his personality, to believe that they knew him and he knew them. Churchill's premiership was a shared experience….That is a major reason why Churchill…was both respected and loved.[121]

This assessment of Churchill is important because he actively constructed a felt sense of intimacy between himself and English citizens; thus his broadcasts—which "entered" homes via the radio—helped to construct a national identity in ways similar to, but more explicit than, Big Ben's function in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

In September of 1939, London was gearing up for war. Nearly 1,500,000 people (out of an estimated 8 million) left Greater London, evacuated by the government. For six months, the period of anxious waiting—known as the Phoney War—bred, in the words of Francis Sheppard, "uncertainty, apathy and low morale."[122] Thus, he continues, by late December of that year, around half the evacuees returned. Between May and June of 1940, France was overwhelmed by the blitzkrieg ("lightening war") and signed an armistice treaty on June 22. Winston Churchill was elected PM in May of 1940, after Neville Chamberlain was forced to resign. As German forces occupied France, Winston Churchill spoke to the Houses of Parliament and the country:

> We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many long months of struggles and of suffering. You ask: What is our policy? I will say: It is to wage war, by sea, and, and air, with all our might…You ask: What is our aim?...It is victory, victory at all costs…for without victory, there is no survival[…]: no survival for the British Empire, no survival for all that the British Empire has stood for, no survival for the urge and impulse of the ages that mankind will move forward toward its goal.[123]

In light of such overarching narratives like this one, which claim that English people are suffering not just for the good of their country but also for the good of the Empire, it might be difficult to understand why I focus on intimacy in this chapter. But the ways the propaganda campaigns and speeches reached out to London citizens were specifically framed in intimate terms. Even some of the more terrifying propaganda posters, such as the

famously evocative "Loose Lips Sink Ships,"[124] suggest that intimacy is important not just privately, but publicly—that choices made because of personal intimacies may create or prevent larger national violence and disruption. What can be counted on is Empire. Elizabeth Bowen's *The Heat of the Day* (1949) suggests ambivalence about that large claim, recalling the argument I made in the previous chapter, but the novel's sensational focus is on intimate relationships. The result is a claustrophobic novel, one that focuses in minute detail on the very small scale: food, furniture, apartments. *The Heat of the Day* takes place in London, 1942, just after the blitz. It follows Stella, an Anglo-Irish War Office Worker in love with Robert Kelway, a Nazi agent. Robert Harrison, an English spy who forces his attentions on Stella by telling her about Kelway, connects this storyline and Louie's. Louie, a working class woman whose husband is a soldier, alleviates her boredom and loneliness by having affairs. While Louie does not figure prominently, the novel ends, after the war, with her and her child, born out of wedlock. The novel participates in the national rhetoric—it is an espionage novel that takes seriously both the propagandist positions mentioned above and the importance of England and Empire—but it also counters it through a contravening narrative about intimacy. The propaganda campaigns and radio broadcasts all are imagined to work from the public sphere into the private sphere and create a shared sense of camaraderie and knowledge—intimacy—among London citizens. However, Because *The Heat of the Day* does not envision any truly "private" London spaces, however, it constructs a sense of London in which intimacy is publicly constructed and privately impossible.

I wrote that London blitz narratives are over-determined. The "myth of the blitz" is a culturally recognizable phrase, although how that phrase is understood differs across time

and space. In his influential work *The Myth of the Blitz* (1991), Angus Calder argues that national narratives are compelling not by virtue of their accuracy but because of the ways they permeate the culture. Interestingly, he also states that the First World War "could not be mythologized so as to help maintain among Britons enthusiasm for armed conflict or faith in the future of their Empire."[125] Calder's argues that the myth of the blitz was an essentially conservative construction, that the national identities constructed during the war supported "an imperial power which was already in irreversible decline…and …divert[ed] attention from the continuing need for radical change in British society."[126] Winston Churchill publicly and convincingly connected World War II to Empire because Hitler was easy to frame as monstrous and because London was attacked: without those two affecting and affective circumstances, the war would have remained impersonal and the rhetoric ineffective. Calder argues that it is impossible to understand "how frightening and confusing the period from April 1940 to June 1941 was for the British people…we simply cannot comprehend that fear and confusion imaginatively. Myth stands in our way, asserting itself, abiding no questions."[127] This quality of over-determination, of stories of the blitz getting in the way of "imaginatively" understanding its emotional effect on Londoners is particularly interesting. It seems to me that most fictional blitz narratives, not just Bowen's novel, are inherently claustrophobic and insular. Even recent works such as Sara Water's *The Night Watch* (2006) focus on London experiences that are discomforting because of what is left out. It's very strange to read World War II accounts that leave out 9 million exterminated people. But, as Peter Ackroyd astutely observes, "to Londoners, it seemed to be a war on London."[128] Even after the blitz, this observation still holds: while World War Two is

understood in terms of the horrors of the Holocaust, the London blitz still somehow exists outside that framework. Such close, insular accounts as Bowen's and Water's work within the framework of nationally constructed ideas about the war; they use a nearly myopic structure which focuses explicitly on London and on the smaller scales of the war to reclaim the means of having a life.[129]

At the end of Chapter One, I quoted Elizabeth Bowen as writing that the "salutary value of the exterior, the comfortable sanity of the concrete came to be realized only when the approach of the Second World War forced one to envisage wholesale destruction."[130] Bowen's characters in *The Heat of the Day* are, collectively, more comfortable in London exterior settings than interior ones; that discomfort is especially evident when they characters are inside together. In this passage, for instance, Stella and Roderick—mother and son—struggle to *feel* the intimacy of a connection already established, not to establish intimacy itself:

> Roderick gazed at Stella—who slightly changed her position at the end of the sofa he had called their boat….In a boat you were happy to be suspended in nothing but light, air, water, opposite another face. On a sofa you could be surrounded by what was lacking. Though this particular sofa backed on a wall and stood on a carpet, it was without environment; it might have been some derelict piece of furniture exposed on a pavement after an air raid or washed up by flood on some unknown shore. His return to his mother cried out for something better—as a meeting, this had to struggle for nature, the nature it should have had; no benevolence came to it from surrounding

things…and between son and mother the absence of every inanimate thing they had in common set up an undue strain. [131]

The idea of intimacy hangs over this passage: two people who know each other well sit on a sofa. The sofa and the apartment are both pieces of a present that cannot fully express Stella as a person because they are not hers by choice—she has moved into a literally and physically evacuated space. The surroundings themselves unmoor their relationship; and, unlike Roderick's metaphoric boat, whose very purpose is to become unmoored, the domestic space cannot be filled with intimate activities if it cannot be fully shared. Instead, an "undue strain" sets in. While there is some nostalgia for a "nature" their relationship "should have had," the focus is on the ways the material landscape cannot support ordinary relationships in ordinary ways. This same sense of the extraordinary inhabiting ordinary spaces opens the novel, infests the spaces and the relationships in the novel, suggesting that all kinds of intimacies, not just those shared by lovers, are damaged. This inhabitation is true even in Regent's Park. The public space serves to construct a public, collective, intimate connection that is suddenly made possible by the destruction of many private homes.

Public Displays

This is Bowen's opening line: "That Sunday, from six o'clock in the evening, it was a Viennese orchestra that played."[132] Much later in the passage, she lets reveals that it's September, 1942, just *after* the Blitz has ended. As the music begins, as it "command[s] this hourless place," it makes people lose "their look of uncertainty"[133] and it works to relieve fatigue, reconnect people. But it also has different effects on different populations: the

English—envisioned as "pairs of lovers" or "married couples" or the elderly—relax in solitary pleasure. The foreigners, on the other hand, "were so intimate with the music you could feel them anticipate every note…in most of them…stoicism…intensified."[134] For the solitary listeners, Bowen describes a different effect:

> [T]hose who came every Sunday, by habit, could be told from those who had come this Sunday by chance. Surprise at having stumbled upon the music was written on the face of the first-timers. For many, chiefly, the concert was the solution of where to be; one felt eased by this place where something was going on. To be sitting packed among other people was better than walking about alone. At the last moment, this crowned the day with meaning. For there had been moments, when the Sunday's beauty…drove its lack of meaning into the heart.[135]

Bowen creates a sense that all of these people in the park are united by what they're hearing. Later, she suggests that this understanding is because everyone there has directly experienced and been affected by war. While they understand these experiences separately—some are stoic, most are weary—they are united at the end of the paragraph by a distinct "lack of meaning" that penetrates their lives. What is intimate in this passage is constructed by the place and the music: everyone at the park, in London, in 1942, is there because they have nowhere else to go and they have been exhausted by war. They are also united by the experience of war and by the music that surprised some, soothed others, and gave all a communal experience. The public space creates connection, closeness and intimacy that private spaces cannot.

As Lauren Berlant argues in the introduction to her collection of essays called *Intimacy*,

> To intimate is to communicate with the sparest of signs and gestures, and at its root intimacy has the quality of eloquence and brevity. But intimacy also involves an aspiration for a narrative about something shared, a story about both oneself and others that will turn out in a particular way. Usually, this story is set within zones of familiarity and comfort: friendship, the couple, and the family form, animated by expressive and emancipating kinds of love. Yet the inwardness of the intimate is met with a corresponding publicness. People consent to trust their desire for "a life" to institutions of intimacy… [but]…this view…represses, of course, another fact about it: the unavoidable troubles, the distractions and disruptions that make things turn out in unpredicted scenarios.[136]

Berlant's collection takes up the ways legal and other institutional forms affect ordinary intimate relations. Bowen's novel directly addresses what happens when the public sphere is itself disrupted, when private comfort zones are no longer readily available and family and friends are evacuated, fighting on the front, or dead. Private intimacies give way to public ones.

The public musical performances in Regent's Park during the war are well-documented affairs. For many writers, they stand in for British resolve and determination during the war. But Bowen does not simply document a universal response to the music: she specifies degrees of intimacy (with the music, with other people, even familiarities of the

space and the event), much as Woolf specifies degrees of refinement in *The London Scene*. Beginning with the concert in the park is a kind of novelistic feint; the concert scene is not idyllic and Louie, the woman who talks to the man, Harrison, is not his love interest nor even the protagonist. The concert is just an event, with a beginning and an end that constructs time and meaning somewhat differently than ordinary wartime living in London: for some it brings reprieve and for others it brings confusion. In this passage, Bowen deflects readers' attention from several things at once. By beginning with Regents' Park and the Viennese orchestra, she conjures an ordinary London evening. Only her descriptions of the exhausted listeners and the setting, coupled with her mention of the year in the last sentence of the third paragraph, suggest that something in the landscape is amiss. The "hints of music" that emanate from the park are "disturbing;" they make people feel as though they were "missing something." That sense of something missing, something not locatable in the landscape, pervades the scene through the characters' "hesitation" and "uncertainty."

As Berlant argues, intimacy has the power to connect people, the power to promise a shared narrative, and also the power to undo or complicate both of those things. Intimacy is a promise of closeness through spatial proximity and shared experiences and affinity; such promises are in the opening scene, and they are complicated. The listeners share the music unevenly. Louie misreads Harrison's interest, for instance, and she feels thwarted by his rebuff. And the music serves as much to emphasize the differences in all of these things as it serves to connect the listeners.

The aural nature of this opening sequence resonates with the technological sounds in *Mrs. Dalloway*, but in that novel the sounds punctuate and shock, while in this novel—

where aural shocks might seem even more appropriate—they are meant to soothe. They don't quite have the desired effect because the bodies in the landscape are still at war and still on alert and thus have flat affects. But the aurality of the park scene gives the narrated space in the opening a sense of dimensionality as the music rises over the trees and the listeners.

The reaction to the music, first suspicion and then relief, is an important frame for the novel. Yi-Fu Tuan, in *Space and Place*, argues that music "can negate a person's awareness of directional time and space. Rhythmic sound that synchronizes with body movement cancels one's sense of purposeful action, of moving through historical space and time toward a goal."[137] And indeed, Bowen does describe the park, at least while the music is playing, as an "hourless place."[138] For Tuan, "space" and "goal" are intimately connected terms; goals are temporal expressions of spatially based experiences. The music is disturbing to those who happen upon it because the strains of public music recall easier times than the present. The music also disrupts the sense of the city under siege, affording people a "solution of where to be,"[139] a place to rest, stop encountering the city and just listen. Thus, Bowen's opening suggests that the music simultaneously constructs a goal-less state for the listeners and passers-by, as well as a not entirely welcome reprieve from their daily, *private* existence. The people in the park cannot go home for comfort: even the lovers are "fatigued by their day alone with each other."[140] The reprieve can only be partial because the war has not ended and the memory of living with war and its effects on the landscape persists. This opening scene does more than set a mood, then, or strike up a series of dislocations

(between the park setting and the war, between the English and foreigners, between the mood and the music); it narrates a form of public intimacy.

Intimacy usually refers to closeness, especially closeness with a sexual partner. But the plot of *The Heat of the Day* doesn't seem to be about, or to generate feelings of, closeness. Instead, the novel follows the lives of Stella, whose lover Robert Kelway is a spy for the Germans, and Louie, who is lonely and bored and ends up pregnant out of wedlock. Anyone familiar with *The Heat of the Day* (1949) may therefore find it surprising to have it be called on to provide evidence of intimacy. Elizabeth Bowen herself has argued that her war fiction is about dislocation (as her quotation at the end of the previous chapter also suggests). In the preface to *The Demon Lover*, her collection of short stories, for instance, she argues that novels were impossible to write during the war, and thus she turned to the fragmented, abbreviated form of the short story. She deliberately constructed *The Heat of the Day* as a war novel, however, and the incongruities and even the occasional inelegance and awkward constructions of her plot and her characters are part of how she accommodates some of the difficulties of living in a bombed city, and how she creates a "salutary" effect from exterior spaces. Furthermore, dislocation and intimacy are not mutually exclusive or even contradictory terms. In fact, dislocation is one of the ways Bowen constructs a narrative of a public form of intimacy—one constructed on the same terms as the radio broadcasts used to bolster London and the nation during the war. In both cases, the narratives construct a "mythic" sense of the city—to recall Calder's phrase— in order to render it legible under the threat of war. As I argued in my first chapter, how to render the city in official and unofficial narratives is ultimately a question of scale. Winston

Churchill and his Cabinet constructed a narrative of London that reinscribes it at the center of Empire; Elizabeth Bowen also envisions it as a political and cultural "center," but she constructs a narrative that emphasizes the devastation of the material world in order to counter a national narrative about private intimacy. Her novel is a counter-narrative of intimacies that are possible only in public spaces.

Radio in England was always imagined as a national public service designed to promote cultural values. As Robert Fortner argues, "The motivation for creating and the expectations of a national broadcasting system in Britain in many ways paralleled those attached to architecture. There was a reformist impulse to help reconstruct a society whose moral underpinnings had been shattered by a bloody conflict, one that had already begun to slip its moorings even prior to the war."[141] Here, Fortner compares broadcasting to public architectures and structures, the kinds of buildings that serve to bolster the sense of ambivalence found in *The London Scene* and *Mrs. Dalloway*. He also imagines that it serves a similar function to material environments, at least in the hands of national interests. I would emphasize that aural sensory input is a vital part of city life, and while I don't want to make too much of this observation, I do think the aural qualities in the opening of *The Heat of the Day* helped lead me to the radio speeches and broadcasts as a kind of aural landscape—a soundscape—and an important component of national structure and identity in Bowen's novel. Both *The Heat of the Day* and the radio broadcasts I discuss in conjunction with the novel constructed a publicly intimate narrative of war because private narratives are impossible without private spaces, and, at least in Bowen's novel, such spaces seem to have disappeared. Broadcast was an important medium for public narratives during

the Second World War not least because the landscape itself was unavailable for national projects and because as an immaterial medium (except, of course for the studios and radios themselves), it helped to construct a kind of mythic landscape in which to narrate war experiences.

Bowen narrates a particular kind of intimacy, an intimacy that exists without express invitation, which she uses to construct a sense of what London felt like during the war. Since much of the material landscape of London was, in effect, ripped from its frame and opened up in many ways, the quality of intimacy pervading the landscape was, in many cases, forced by the conditions of the city. This forced intimacy can be seen in the narrated landscape of London at war. Below, I discuss two examples, one material and one rhetorical.

Forced Public Intimacies

The Heat of the Day describes a London that cannot be mapped by tourists who want to recreate the walks taken by the characters. The city feels more amorphous than it does in *Mrs. Dalloway*, in which Westminster is mapped out well enough to provoke readers and critics to walk the sites and in the novel.

As Bowen's novel demonstrates, intimacy between two people can threaten the country. Intimate knowledge of the city itself, however, was a necessity at this time. Bowen's focus is not necessarily on navigable routes than on how to survive in a damaged city. One way to emphasize that survival is to focus on the minutiae of the destruction rather than on the destruction of the larger city environs.

There is something intimate about seeing the contents of a house exposed unwillingly to outside viewers. It creates a voyeuristic impulse, a desire to see not just the damage that makes such an extraordinary thing possible, but also a sense of glimpsing private lives, private belongings. This glimpse is accompanied by a pervasive idea that we may somehow come to know more than usual about people through the involuntary exposure of their belongings to an uninvited public. A. S. G. Butler, an architect turned "ruin-recorder," documented his work during 1941 and the "element of curiosity" bombed buildings incite.[142] Going into one of these damaged homes, Butler writes:

> There was every sign of a very hurried exit. Jumbled beds with frozen sheets, clothes and shoes and handbags flung about. Half a perambulator lay by a window which had fallen in—frame and all—on top of it. The tipped up little gas cooker had a triumphant foot through a gramophone record…The roof was nearly uncovered. Its slates were in the beds and the cistern dangled by a feeble [r]ope above a squashed water closet....The floors were frozen slush on slimy lino. The back wall was gone completely and the floors jutted and drooped in space. A child's doll lay on the brink, with its head off and its skirt blown up, showing its legs. One develops a great pity for things. Just simple things made by somebody and used for years by somebody else. I feel it now and then more strongly than distress for people. Things are so helpless and entirely innocent of all this rot. Then, in these dismal houses, it is sad to think of the hours of good work spent in creating their ugliness; but it is sadder to see even that smashed up in a second.[143]

As a former architect, Butler's focus is on the material detritus of lives left behind to "rot" without owners to claim the remnants. But he also documents the great details, which let the materials speak not just of their own demise but of the losses inflicted upon their former owners. By virtue of his job but by no means alone in witnessing the leavings of other people's home lives, Butler, has a rare intimacy with the material objects upon which those home lives are constructed. Bowen, as a London resident during the war and an air raid warden, knew well how the private contents of people's material lives can become public. In the previous chapter, I quoted this: "The obliteration of man's surroundings, streets and houses, tables and chairs sent up, for him, their psychological worth."[144] That worth is figured in *The Heat of the Day* as a loss of private intimacies *because* the material landscape cannot accommodate them.

In *The Heat of the Day*, as in Butler's description, such ordinarily private, personal materials leak out into public spaces. The narrative effect is to make intimacy a public proposition and private intimacies nearly impossible, "unnavigable," as Roderick's boat metaphor quoted above suggests. And in this novel, one way to navigate the unnavigable is rooted in ordinary, well-traveled and accessible spaces. For instance, in this passage from *The Heat of the Day*, Bowen describes London during the 1940 blitz:

> In offices, factories, ministries, shops, kitchens, the hot yellow sands of each afternoon ran out; fatigue was the one reality…Those rendered homeless sat where they had been sent; or, worse…retraced their steps to look for what was no longer there. Most of all the dead, from mortuaries, from under cataracts of rubble, made their anonymous presence—not as today's dead

> but as yesterday's living—felt throughout London. Uncounted, they continued to move in shoals through the city day, pervading everything to be seen or heard or felt with their torn-off sense, drawing on this tomorrow they had expected—for death cannot be so sudden as all that. Absent from the routine which had been life, they stamped upon that routine with their absence—not knowing who the dead were, you could not know which might be the staircase somebody for the first time was not mounting this morning, or at which street corner the newsvendor missed a face, or which trains and buses in the homegoing rush were this evening lighter by at least one passenger.[145]

Here, the city is being mapped not by what is institutionally recognizable—parishes, street names, geography—but by overwhelming absence, and the presence of death, which cannot be "seen or heard or felt" but which is omnipresent and recognized by an absence "felt" by the city itself. The incongruity between a presence that cannot be felt and an absence which can gets to the heart of Bowen's need to write about the materiality of the city during war. By writing death—not dying—into her London narrative, and by creating spaces that accommodate the invisible, Bowen references an intimate and public knowledge of death. Intimacy is still publicly possible through this connection, while private life is unbearable and official accounts—"historical" accounts for Bowen, as for Woolf—disavow the connection. I take up Bowen's relationship to history below; here, this sense of public intimacy brings the ambivalence of Woolf's London directly into the landscape and equally directly acknowledges it as shared public grief and responsibility.

Londoners' intimate experiences of and with the war helped to construct the city as a mythic space. In fact, as early as 1934, Churchill was publicly using this concept of central, mythic space to argue for a strong military defense against Germany. In a November 16 broadcast, he said, "Not only have we preserved our life and freedom through the centuries, but gradually we have come to be the heart and centre of an Empire which surrounds the globe. It is indeed with a pang of stabbing pain that we are all in this mortal danger."[146]

I examined the concept of the centrality of London to the Empire in Chapter One; here Churchill explicitly connects that center to an imperiled homeland. Because Churchill delivered this BBC speech while his unpopularity forbade him from advocating war, however, he argues only that war seems inevitable unless England should "submit"—to "be conquered." This language is meant to evoke a strong response to the contrary, but he does not press that point. Instead, he argues that "on our new scale of life as a smaller state we could not feed more than perhaps half of those who live here now. Great stresses will arise in deciding which half should survive."[147] The mythic space of Empire is employed as a public good for large numbers of people, one which must, therefore, be publicly preserved. The propaganda campaigns during the Second World War reinforce that claim. Churchill skillfully calls on a localized sense of homeland and speaks to that basic human need for shelter and community, rhetorically forcing an intimate connection between the local and imperial.

Yi-Fu Tuan has a useful way of thinking about the connection between myth and place. In *Space and Place*, he argues that mythical spaces can be of two kinds: one is a "fuzzy area of defective knowledge surrounding the empirically unknown" and can include

such imagined spaces as the areas beyond the known world, or even the angle and texture of the back of your office chair.[148] The other is "the spatial component of a worldview" and can include, for example. the east or west coasts of the US, in which cases the meaning of these cardinal appellations resides not in spatial orientation but in cultural attitudes and lore.[149]

In both instances, myth-making seems to be inevitable; they each exist to help us feel more secure in our worlds. And, in both instances, paying attention to the landscape and the stories about the landscape reveal more about the nature of the myths and their relationships to the people of various regions than might otherwise be found in the narratives without this emphasis. London's urban spaces were especially ripe for myth-making because of the devastation of the city. As Maureen Waller points out, even when the propaganda campaigns generated cynicism, the need for connection forced some people to seek refuge in the subway "even if they were not actually homeless."[150] People sought out public spaces—shelters, subways, work spaces—for safety, for comfort, and a means of creating intimate—if temporary—public connections.

The concept of mythic space within narratives of wartime London suggests that overarching cultural stories are not inherently bad, nor are they avoidable. Searching for comforting senses of home, particularly when homes are not stable refuges, is understandable and perhaps even necessary for survival. That discomfort explains why the language of the "home front" was ubiquitous and persuasive. The project of war, particularly a war which affects the warring nation's civilian homes and lives, engenders national rhetoric

and attempts to unify citizens in ways that tend to elide differences. The very idea of a home front is a geographic means of establishing civic unity.

In addition to his conception of mythic space, Tuan proposes another important concept concerning with wartime London: that of homeland. He argues that homeland is "a region (city or countryside) large enough to support a people's livelihood."[151] He also contends that regions almost always exist within a framework of mythic space: homeland is "the focal point of a cosmic structure," but he also argues that since the "center" is not a particular point on the earth, it is also a "concept in mythic thought rather than a deeply felt value bound to unique events and locality."[152] This is how people can leave their homelands and survive their destruction; but, presumably, they need some way to understand private disaster. I have suggested that London war novels seem insular precisely because the need to construct a sense of homeland—an affective proposition—can create myopia. Such novels depict a homeland, a home front, whose borders can't be crossed; thus they support the national rhetoric that London's borders won't be further invaded through the streets, even while they *were* invaded, and perhaps *because of* the ways they were invaded, from the air, with little warning other than cautionary noises of various kinds. I argue in Chapter Four that such elisions or myopia can be a way of rewriting popular knowledge, that it can construct a counter-narrative. In *The Heat of the Day*, the narrative of homeland stands in for the physical materials of home.

Intrigue and Love

Even as material objects can create intimacy, they can also mislead. Bowen writes powerfully of the mistaken impressions material objects can give when she introduces Stella, waiting in her flat for Harrison. At first, since he has called it a "date," it seems likely to be an assignation, but as the scene unfolds, it becomes clear that more is going on than a love story. Of the apartment, Bowen writes:

> Here in Weymouth Street she had the irritation of being surrounded by somebody else's irreproachable taste: the flat, redecorated in the last year of peace, still marked the point at which fashion in the matter had stood still—to those who were not to know this room was not her own it expressed unexceptionally but wrongly.[153]

Bowen, secretive herself about Stella, never explains how she is expressed "wrongly" by the room, whether the "wrongness" stems from the room's unexceptional nature or whether the room is the wrong kind of unexceptional; ambiguities of this personal kind persist throughout the novel. She does, however, amplify this sense of Stella's unknowability when Harrison attempts to understand her through her surroundings. He first comments that her things are "pretty" and then later, at a loss for words, "looked around the room which so well knew the person under discussion."[154] Although Stella tells him that it's not her apartment, Harrison manages to disregard this important piece of information.

Harrison's refusal to see the importance of the war to Stella's circumstances accords with his attempt to blackmail her into having an affair with him: he is a man who sees the war as something which legitimates his unseemly, if more or less truthful, character. As he

explains to Stella about the war, "[I]t's a time when I'm not a crook. For me there've been not so good times when I did seem to be a bit out in my calculations, so you must see how where I'm concerned things have taken a better turn: everything about adds up to what I made it."[155] Harrison's posture here, as someone who can manipulate what "adds up" because of the war, is at odds with his inability to understand Stella through her material environment. Stella does "add up" for him by the end of the novel, however. As she asks him, after Robert's death, in their last meeting, "Were you then, somehow, love's necessary missing part? You brought that into us, if you killed him. But now, you and I are no longer two of three…we're not where we were."[156] This meeting ends ambiguously: Stella tells Harrison she's thinking of getting married, which will make the math "add up" again to three. Just as the firing stops for the evening, Harrison asks an unanswered question, "…would you rather I stayed till the All Clear?"[157] This open-ended question leaves their intimate relationship uncharacterizable as a sexual one, and, like Stella's relationship to Robert Kelway, marks it as one specifically bounded by war.

Allan Hepburn has argued that *The Heat of the Day* focuses on love because "timelessness"—a constitutive feature of trauma—is also a popular expression in narratives about love and thus intersects with the trauma of war. Quoting Bowen, he writes that during the blitz " 'everybody in London was in love'…presumably because they needed to anchor themselves in an emotion of being remembered when they might be killed imminently. They are suspended in the present."[158] I argue that "everyone" being "in love' constructs love not as private relationship, as it is in *Mrs. Dalloway*, but as public. For Hepburn, love and its timelessness are symptoms of war trauma in this particular spy novel and also "a

political effect, in that war breeds love and kills it."[159] Both trauma and politics also firmly place this kind of intriguing love as a public proposition. While he is right that most spy novels of the period tend to treat heterosexual love "as a pesky distraction that befalls male spies,"[160] Hepburn does not emphasize that there are at least two detectives in this novel: Stella and Harrison. Louie may count as a third, if we believe Fredric Jameson's assertion that detective novels are a "form which unconsciously seeks to grasp or represent the social totality as whole" and that "this shared narrative world tends to discredit the detective and to undermine the privileged distance of the epistemological point of view [because] every position…is ideological and implies the taking of a political stance and the making of a social judgment."[161] Thus, Bowen's novel, with its multiple detectives and detections, does indeed make social judgments and take political stances. While she supports the war (a point I take up later in the chapter), she also recognizes that it destroys the landscape and with it, personal intimacies.

Just before the blitz, and throughout the well-documented propaganda campaigns which emphasized the problem of intrigue, of spying as a critical tool of the "enemy,"[162] Churchill tried to prepare British citizens for the anticipated military breach of national borders. On May 13, 1940, in his first broadcast as Prime Minister, he asserted that the British and French militaries, fighting in France, were "matched squarely against…their adversaries."[163] John Lukacs argues that Churchill actually feared that the French would surrender, and that their doing so would be a problem for England, whose troops were stationed largely outside the country. As Lukacs explains,

> The tone of the BBC was well mannered and somber, not providing misleading or inaccurate news, but also not suggesting what the Germans' surrounding of the quarter million [troops at the French Front] meant. The newspapers' reporting was generally inaccurate…But in May 1940 the radio and press did not quite reflect or form what the British people were thinking…here and there, some people (mostly in London) became suddenly aware of the seeming hopelessness of the situation.[164]

Bowen seems to agree with Lukacs' assessment of the inaccuracy and inadequacy of newspapers, and, since intimacy is a form of knowing, this indictment provides a useful rubric for understanding how Bowen's critique of society works throughout the novel. For, unlike Stella, who listens to the radio, Louie reads the newspapers because "[i]f you could not keep track of what was happening you could at least take notice of what was said."[165] Rather than giving Louie news, however (since they use "the same communiqués" over and over), the papers give her a perspective:

> from the articles...Louie, after a week or two on the diet, discovered that she *had* got a point of view, and not only *a* point of view but the right one…Dark and rare were the days when she failed to find on the inside of her paper an address to or else account of herself. Was she not a worker, a soldier's lonely wife, a war orphan, a pedestrian, a Londoner, a home and animal-lover, a thinking democrat, a movie-goer, a woman of Britain, a letter-writer, a fuel-saver and a housewife? She was only not a mother, a knitter, a gardener, a foot-sufferer or a sweetheart—at least, not rightly. Louie now

> felt bad only about any part of herself which in any way did not fit into the papers' picture: she could not have survived their disapproval.[166]

The newspapers here mirror what's "wrong" with Louie: in looking for intimacy, she finds the popular points of view and mistakes that for knowing and feeling close to her world. In this case, the material world provides a distraction from the war by giving her an overarching story to tell about it: Louie's war is part of the invasion myth.

Churchill's radio tone—certainly well-mannered and somber, as Lukacs says of the BBC broadcasters—sets the stage for invasion: "After this battle in France abates its force, there will come the battle for our Island—for all that Britain is and all that Britain means—that will be the struggle…The interests of property, the hours of labor, are nothing compared with the struggle for life and honor, for right and freedom, to which we have vowed ourselves."[167]

But by July 14th, Churchill's tone had changed somewhat. Broadcasting on Bastille Day, he worries about France: "When you have a friend and comrade at whose side you have faced tremendous struggles, and your friend is smitten down by a stunning blow, it may be necessary to make sure that the weapon that has fallen from his hands shall not be added to the resources of your common enemy."[168] This concern for the French resources—people, certainly, but within the context of the speech, weapons and ships more importantly—couched as it is in the metaphor of a nation as a living body, expands when he says, "Many of these countries have been poisoned by intrigue before they were struck down by violence. They have been rotted from within before they were smitten from without. How else can you explain what has happened to France, to the French Army, to the French

people, to the leaders of the French people?"[169] Drawing the parallel between an invaded France and a soon-to-be bombarded England, Churchill notes that intrigue will "rot" a unified, peaceful people and ruin them and their land.

It is unsurprising, then, that Bowen's novel would concern itself with intrigue. It is also unsurprising that political infiltrations would be imbricated in other, more personal intrigues and infiltrations. What is perhaps surprising is how intimacy, surveillance and ways and means of knowing extend across the novel, producing multiple detectives, multiple sites of detection and multiple means of knowing. Fredric Jameson has argued that there are two kinds of detective stories, both of them involving "social detectives."[170] In the first case, a single detective uncovers a crime that has ramifications for a collective; in the second, collectives uncover the crime(s) of an individual. How Bowen's novel fits into this description depends upon how many detectives a reader perceives in the novel.
I contend that Harrison presses Stella into counter-espionage service, which she willingly undertakes because she hopes Robert is innocent. Robert, too, is a detective in the novel, but as both his crimes and his detections remain undiscussed throughout, his social function is against the collective: he is a bad them, not a good us. He is part of the process of intrigue that "rotted" France.

The connection between intrigue and intimacy, as Laura Kipnis has shown, is one of register. Intimacy is often thought of in terms of sexual coupling, in terms of a happy marriage, but, as Kipnis argues, the "labor" of marriage and the "exchange" of intimacy are also economic terms, "governed by…scarcity, threat and internalized prohibitions,"[171] terms which speak not just of our mundane private lives but of our mundane workaday lives.

These fears of the fragility of intimacy, of the impact of institutions on our private social and material lives, are at the forefront of Bowen's novel: scarcity and threat construct an insularity which is felt throughout the text as characters attempt to communicate or withhold secrets from one another. The uneven structure of the novel, beginning and ending with Louie, although she is a minor character, constructs not a simple modernist fragmentation but a sense of the delicacy of the narrative: it hangs by a thread of tacit consent on the part of the readers and by Bowen's deliberate construction of an insular novel, enveloped in personal threats and the isolation of London during and after the Blitz.

Jameson's claim about detective fiction is an important one for understanding Louie's role in *The Heat of the Day* because he is attempting to show the ways some texts, usually dismissed as "minor," "popular," "non-scholarly," work within and against larger ideologies. In fact, cultural texts which do not easily fit into neat categories of genre or canon are often interesting precisely for that reason. In *The Heat of the Day*, the visible love affairs and adultery suggest that homes are not bounded spaces of intimacy, and that private love "leaks out" of these spaces. By virtue of her nameless affair that results in her pregnancy, Louie is the most visible example of this leakage. Angus Calder reads the novel's close as a mis-step: he argues that Bowen's attempt to write a lower-class character is unconvincing, and that "her baby, though son of a causal lover, not of her husband Tom…is named 'Tom' and represents, however wryly, the future of the People."[172] I think this reading works only if the focus is on Bowen's narration of Louie's "inner world."

If Bowen's novel is read as an affective counter-narrative to official London war accounts, then Louie's child can be seen as a recovery of the private spheres of intimacy.

She can hide her intimate liasions with other men because Tom is dead and the baby is his namesake. Private intimacies can once again be private; for Bowen, this is not a wholly welcome turn of events because women had greater freedom of movement and more choice of work during the war.

Kitchen Front Armies

One private intimacy often taken for granted in stable economies is the pleasure of buying, sharing and cooking food. In World War II London, even food is a publicly shared intimacy. The Ministry of Information ran the bulk of the propaganda campaigns. They ranged from posters advising people to be careful what they said in public to BBC radio programs with names like *The Kitchen Front*, which was supposed to help people deal with limited food resources in innovative ways. While these campaigns were frequently mocked, they also emphasized the difficulties of knowing how to navigate one's environment in times of war. The implication seems to be that you couldn't know whom to trust. Bowen's spy novel reflects that assessment; however, she connects spying with intimate knowledge of people and material things in ways suggesting that these connections are important, both personally and nationally.

One of the most well-rehearsed myths of wartime London concerns the food: the rationing, the difficulty of getting imported foods and fresh fruit like oranges, bananas, and tea. Food rationing began—after several postponements—on January 8, 1940. The allotments seem outlandishly small, so it's worthwhile to quote Juliet Gardiner: "The first foods to be rationed were butter (4 oz), sugar (12 oz), bacon and ham (4 oz) per person per

week. …Meat was rationed from 11 March 1940…Cheese was first rationed on 5 May 1941…In the following July rationing was extended to tea (2oz), margarine (6oz in conjunction with butter)."[173] In addition to the rationing, "British Restaurants" (Churchill's renaming of the erstwhile "Communal Feeding Centers") proved a popular means of getting fed. The restaurants were started for the homeless or those who'd lost their cooking facilities, but they were open to anyone. It was a non-profit venture, and, according to Gardiner, the "London County Council provided around 250 restaurants in London in schools, halls, municipal buildings and such unlikely venues as the Victoria and Albert Museum."[174]

It is against this backdrop that the home front became analogous to the battle front. The Ministry of Information dropped leaflets and Lord Woolton, the Minister of Food, regularly went on the air in a brief program called *Food Facts*. In his first broadcast, he said, "It is to you, the housewives of Britain, that I want to talk tonight. We have a job to do together, you and I, an immensely important war job…For we are the army that guards the kitchen front in this war."[175] *The Kitchen Front*, with its middle-class hostesses "Gert and Daisy," became a popular feature of BBC programming.

The BBC collaborated with the British government on many programming choices; one of the most effective and popular campaigns was the Kitchen Front Campaign. As Sian Nicholas argues, the BBC "was the obvious medium for food advice. It had a long tradition of programmes devoted to household management, and it took little adaptation to introduce a housekeeping-in-wartime theme."[176] The Ministry of Food came up with the name, and the first broadcast was a 15-minute segment in June 1940. The program featured recipes and

advice in a humorous and upbeat fashion for how to live with the rationing, as well as how to deal with fuel rationing and shortages.

The common assumption about food rationing and shortages in England during the war is that people, by and large, bore up quite well. In *The Heat of the Day*, Bowen provides a counter-narrative to the war propaganda about food. When Stella and Robert leave London to visit his family at Holme Dene, Stella is berated for not bringing her butter ration with her:

> [E]ach one of the family had his or her own ration placed before his or her plate in a differently colored shell. Today was the delusive opening of the rationing week; the results of intemperance, as the week drew on, would be to be judged. Stella's solitary Londoner's footloose habits of living, in and out of restaurants, had kept her from many of the realities of the home front: for some reason the sight of the colored shells did more than anything so far to make her feel seedy, shady; though she could not but admire the arrangement as being at once fanciful, frank and fair. She said hurriedly that she did not eat tea.
>
> "I would offer you some of my butter," said Ernestine, "but that would only make you feel uncomfy."[177]

Dining with someone else's family is an intimate experience: here, that intimacy comes in the form of shared knowledge of wartime rations, and of Stella's understanding that her war, her London, doesn't quite match the national narratives about it. Robert's family, always temperate and happily doing their part for the war effort at home, leave her feeling uneasy

and uncomfortable. As I have argued throughout this chapter, private intimacies are not possible for Londoners; when Stella shares meals with either Robert in crowded London restaurants, she feels at ease. Even outside of London, in Holme Dene, private intimacies are not possible for her.

Dislocations and Intimacies

I conclude this chapter with a look at some of the ways this novel reflects the "dislocation" Bowen identified as an important feature of World War II literature. She writes, "a picture presented in terms of the actualities only would be a false one, inseparable from happenings are the mood, temper and climate of their time."[178] Agreeing, Calder includes a reading of *The Heat of the Day* in the epilogue to *The Myth of the Blitz* (1991) as an imperfect example of a counter-narrative to the myth. He maintains that, while the novel clumsily mishandles lower-middle-class identities during the war, it also works to undermine the myth of wartime British morale.

Calder was impelled to write *The Myth of the Blitz* specifically because of a different kind of dislocation: Margaret Thatcher's use of World War II rhetoric. (Margaret Thatcher makes an appearance in Chapter Three). He writes in the preface:

> My anger, first over the sentimentalism of 1940 by Labor apologists, then over the abuse of "Churchillism" by Mrs. Thatcher during the "Falklands War," led me to seek, every which way, to undermine the credibility of the mythical narrative—for instance by questioning British "morale."[179]

He continues, in his preface, to argue that, although neither Thatcher nor the myth of the blitz carries the same weight in the framing of national identities as they once did, they are still "ideologically active."[180] Calder does indeed shed light on how some events, particularly those events that come about because of or during war, can be interpreted and re-interpreted to suit an imagined national sensibility. For instance, Calder is persuasive when he explains that the battle of Dunkirk (which Churchill called a "colossal disaster," and which makes an important appearance in *The Heat of the Day*), has been rewritten by many historians to exemplify Britain's graceful acceptance of defeat (presumably, only those defeats which serve a larger "victory" count).[181] The emphasis on location—of nations, ships, beaches, troops—in the BBC broadcasts and on smaller details of local areas in Bowen's fictional account—kitchens, streets, dining rooms—help to make the everyday specific. Since Bowen seems, in her preface to Calder's book and elsewhere, skeptical of history because it cannot account for lived experience, her emphasis on the material landscape of London during the war creates a map of London that is based on experiences of intimacy.

I raise this point because *The Heat of the Day* is a slippery novel. Some critics argue that Bowen is staunchly pro-Churchill in her attitudes; others, such as Calder, argue that she subverts Churchillian ideas in order to critique them. Bowen herself does little to make her stance clear, either in the novel or in her other writings; I suspect this reluctances results from her not always being sure of where she stood in relationship to London, or even to England. London was certainly her home, but she also considered herself Irish; occupying this uncomfortable—and even unpopular—view of herself as "Anglo-Irish" is an ambivalence that is necessarily reflected in her novels.[182]

Bowen's book works within and against the myth of wartime London. Like the radio constructions of English public identities, it plays with a mythic sense of homeland and of place, a necessary convention given that the book was written so shortly after such a devastating—to London—war. That ambiguity is part of what makes the novel potentially unsatisfying and confusing: because it is working from within the confines of a mythic construction of a real place, it has to tread carefully on the values and value of the place. Because Bowen has a difficult time figuring out her relationship to her "homeland(s)," strange valences of rootedness (and uprootedness) arise within the novel. In a BBC broadcast, Bowen says that she became disillusioned with history and then turned to geography. She adds, "But with geography, also, something shriveled and shrank—there was *no* undiscovered country, now. What a prospect—what an absence of prospect, rather." [183] These two categories are, for Bowen, simultaneously too encompassing and too limiting. History requires the same facts that Woolf despised; geography leaves nothing to the imagination. Geography, especially, created a peculiar dislocation for Bowen.

Elizabeth Bowen regularly traveled to Ireland in 1942. She was contacted by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Robert Cranborne, and asked to take notes about the attitude of the Irish toward the war. Concerned about their neutrality, Winston Churchill wondered how badly received it would be if he took control of their ports. In her notes dating November 9th, Bowen writes to Lord Cranborne, "I could wish some factions in England showed less anti-Irish feeling. I have noticed an I suppose inevitable increase of this in England during the last year. The charge of 'disloyalty' against the Irish has always, given the plain facts of history, irritated me. I could wish that the English kept history in

mind more, that the Irish kept it mind less."[184] Bowen's activities as "Churchill's spy"—this is the phrase the publishers of her *Notes on Eire* use to describe her activities—were fairly innocuous, and she supports Irish neutrality throughout her notes. While the publishers see her actions as clearly taking a side, I think they reflect a difficulty of hybridity. She expands her ambivalent stance in her comments about Anglo-Irish identity in a transcript of a BBC interview:

> I feel Anglo-Irish. A race inside a race—There's absolutely no doubt about that...I think the Anglo-Irish are sort of a race carved out of two races, and it would be too simple to say that I've been Irish in England and more English in Ireland. But I'm extremely conscious of the Irish-Irish, and feel they are a pure race. But I'm afraid I'm a hybrid. I don't think I have an inferiority because of it. I think the Irish are an overpowering race if they concentrate there too much, and that's why the half of me—the Irish half—has always overflowed into England, into America and to any place….[185]

The difficulties of hybridity, of "overflowing" as she phrases it here, are reflected in her language in *The Heat of the Day*. Robert Casario argues that Bowen's novel "is infused with modernist assumptions about narrative, but at the same time it is constructed out of a suspenseful debate with them."[186] I would argue that Bowen's language—which is uneven and sometimes confusing—is a way of narrating her sensations of dislocation. In my introduction, I claim that narrative is crucial to understanding the connection between space and affect. To write uneasily, to write in confusion, must also then signify some difficulties with the space in which one writes. I also argue that dislocation and intimacy are not

incompatible; rather, dislocation can move the site and the register of intimacies. If Bowen's own experiences are indeed reflected affectively in *The Heat of the Day,* then the counter-narrative I identify as reacting against the myth of the blitz can also be seen as a complicated affective response to belonging intimately to two countries. London is Bowen's—and Stella's—home, so it becomes the site of an uneasy reconciliation of ambivalent identities.

Chapter Three

Free Spaces: Autonomy in Thatcher's London

History and literature have a clearer separation in the previous two chapters than they do in the next two. The shift from modernism and late modernism to postmodernism in literature and in architecture—from disjunction to multiplicity, from grand narrative about a space via aerial views or long avenues, to singular slice-of-life neighborhood perspectives—certainly gives rise to different means of organizing both narrated and built materials, but so, too, does the shift in London's circumstances. After World War Two, London faced waves of immigrants coming in from protectorates and Commonwealth nations. Much of the city was rebuilt or renovated, and new configurations of neighborhoods developed.

In Alan Hollinghurst's *The Swimming-Pool Library* (1988), the protagonist Will Beckwith treats London as a space to be trolled for sexual encounters. As he goes to the gym, travels the underground, eats in private clubs, Will imbues the landscape with his feckless desires, imagining that the streets of London invite and support his playful designs on men. His placement in time and history—London, 1983—is not incidental. A gay son of a peer, Will is in London, while Margaret Thatcher is the Prime Minister. Will's privileges as a healthy, rich, white gay man[187] rests upon his steadfast refusal to acknowledge histories of colonial rule and oppression, of homosexual criminalization, and of many of the ways the present responds in accordance with those histories. As Will comes in contact with other characters—characters who have different relationships to the city and its histories—the spaces and materials of London create a kind of palimpsest of history, constructed by the

layering of material objects which frame individual freedoms in a larger political context. That context is Margaret Thatcher's governance of England—her urgency in preserving an English heritage, her insistence on racial and heterosexual norms, her economic practices and her ideas of responsible citizenry. In this chapter, I argue that the felt sense of autonomy in both Hollinghurst's novel and Margaret Thatcher's memoir *The Downing Street Years* (1993) is constructed specifically through spatial narratives, and that feeling autonomous, especially in 1980s London, rests largely upon how one views one's relationship to the urban environment of London.

Freedom of movement is a spatial experience; subjugation, too, is often experienced as a form of spatial constraint. Self-governance, for instance, seems to require a national citizenship in a country—a bounded space—which has certain political freedoms and rights. Similarly, personal freedom, in its most basic forms, seems to involve the ability to choose a residence, choose a place of work, choose a social field of influence—all of which also have geographical restraints. Autonomy may best be defined against those forces that seem to curtail freedom: against political oppression, against civil rights, against freedom of movement. Which forces are seen as restricting and which forces are seen as enhancing freedom, however, are not always agreed-upon; for instance, some gender constructions or racist policies seem to restrict freedoms, but these restrictions are historically contested suppositions. Still, each of these forces has traceable spatial components and processes. Autonomy is also an important component of vulnerability: feeling vulnerable suggests that boundaries can be crossed, and autonomy is a boundary-crossing capability.

My interest in autonomy is as a category of spatial experience which has components of sensation, emotion, and rational thought, and which participates in both individual and communal configurations of identity. If spatial narratives do indeed yield connections between the personal and the communal, between the publicly political and the privately lived, and if emotional connections to spaces are unavoidable, then understanding how spaces are articulated by and through emotional connections becomes one way of understanding multiple valences of histories.

The scale of autonomy is equally important in *The Downing Street Years* and *The Swimming-Pool Library*. In Thatcher, the large-scale conceptions of London as the national governing seat of England, and of England as a vital part of an economically driven global exchange, color her perceptions of London sites. Hollinghurst's emphasis is on the smaller scales of neighborhoods and lives yields a different sense of London's importance. The two texts are inversions of one another in other ways: Thatcher virtually ignores racial politics and never mentions sexual orientation in her book,[188] yet she writes about English values and "Victorian virtues" which construct and reconstruct narratives about both; Hollinghurst pays explicit attention to both minoritized racial identities and sexual orientations. Unlike in *The Line of Beauty* (2004), Hollinghurst's latest novel and one for which he won the Booker Prize, neither Margaret Thatcher nor municipal nor national policies of the time explicitly enter into the novel. Instead, they haunt the novel with their absences, as Richard Dellamora has shown.[189] What interests me here is the way they haunt the *landscape*: for Will Beckwith, in *The Swimming-Pool Library*, London itself provides the materials through which histories are elided or made visible. *The Swimming-Pool Library* encapsulates many

of the issues left out of Thatcher's narrative, and does so with incredible economy. Thatcher uses historical data to narrate space and to construct a sense of a continuous England which crosses times and spaces; Hollinghurst uses urban spaces to narrate multiple histories which are cited on the very materials of the city.

The intersections of national and local forms of identity and politics—which are crucial to the shaping of London in the 1980s—are also foregrounded in both texts. Thatcher's account is positioned as an authoritative narrative not just about her policies but about England and English character, about how she believes the nation was and should be. Hollinghurst's novel, which takes place in Thatcherite London, centers on Will's sexual entanglements and his involvement with a gay peer, Lord Nantwich, who asks him to write his biography. Will's sense of autonomy participates in this Thatcherite narrative, but alters its story to accommodate a different, more personal sense of urban cartography. His sense of autonomy is much more closely aligned with the local government's: he understands how national narratives both participate in and hide racist and heterosexist discourses; he is implicitly critical of the ways Thatcherism describes and circumscribes identities. Because the narrative constructed by Hollinghurst is fictional, however, the ways history and politics interleave the novel are not declarative; instead they are made visible through material objects and landscapes. While Thatcher imposes an historical/history-making narrative on the geography, Hollinghurst uses material objects—photographs, journals, lived urban spaces such as the gym and the Underground, as well as bodies themselves—to create a narrative map which directs the reader to a particular way of understanding the intersection

between history and the present, between national identities and the individual ones which render them possible.

These two spatial narratives yield different concepts of civic identities. In Thatcher's memoir, history and home are vital pieces of English identity that create culture. In *The Swimming-Pool Library*, homes and histories collide in often uneasy ways to create elisions in identities as well as common ground. Next, I examine how London politics in the 1980s affect both texts' spatial narratives.

Home Bases: Heritage and History

The pieces of history, the facts and materials of the past that shape personal and national heritages, are just that—fragments, material fractions of past time that are always interpreted in a present setting for a contemporary purpose. History, which Margaret Thatcher argues is "uncontroversially" about the past,[190] is thus also always about the material present. Questions of personal autonomy are frequently intertwined with the ways public and private freedoms interact in material space—with the way civic centers and commercial enterprises, for instance, encroach on private lands, or the ways private interests curtail public spaces. In *The Downing Street Years*, Thatcher creates a sense of England as a domestic space, using spatial language to construct a national history which places "home" in subtle companionship with national identities. This perhaps unsurprising move coincides with shifts in the built environment and with attitudes about that environment, as Raphael Samuel has shown.

In *Theatres of Memory*, Samuel explores the intersections between unofficial forms of knowledge and history and history-making institutions. Writing about national histories in the late 1980s and early 1990s, he argues that heritage—that sense of how the past connects with the present in personally meaningful ways—grows with and around national constructions of identity. He shows how preservation projects and other urban geographical sites and histories coincided with Conservative narratives about British identity. He connects personal affinities for particular histories to national registers of being, arguing, for instance, that the move to preserve Victorian landmarks coincided with Conservative reinterpretations—what he terms "appropriations"—of the past. Here, I quote him at some length:

> The historicist turn in British culture coincided with the decline of Labor as a membership party, with the demise—in Britain as in other countries—of socialism as a worker's faith, and with the Labor Party's lack of historic confidence in the necessity and justice of its own cause—a disillusion compounded by a growing alienation from, and disenchantment with, its own electorate. At the same time, the break-up of the two-camp "us" and "them" divisions in British society, the fragmentation of class into a thousand different splinters, the crumbling barrier between "high" and "low" culture and the growth of a two-way traffic between them, robbed the "popular" of its subversive potential and even allowed it to be annexed to the Conservative cause. It is perhaps indicative of this that restoration of History to the core curriculum in the schools was the work of a Conservative

> government, and that while, in the subsequent debate radical voices were very much to the fore in the schools and universities, there was barely a squeak of the Labor front bench at Westminster. [191]

Samuel's project, in this section of his book, is to show the ways "people's history" or "popular history" evolve in the built landscape through preservation and tourist attractions, through mass media representations of past histories, and in the national rhetoric of leaders, to became part of a nation-building script about the past. In the process, he argues, microcosms of histories emerge, and new national narratives about the past, about heritage, are constructed. Samuel contends that the new versions of British history reinforce democratic values and the value of labor ("retrospectively dignified"), and "privileges the private over the public sphere and sees people as consumers rather than—or as well as—producers."[192] This reinterpretation of the past popularizes that past, which, as he points out above, also makes it a useful means of framing the present in a national context.

For my purposes, Samuel's argument has three important ramifications. First, he connects the built landscape to institutional knowledge-building, showing how that knowledge passes "down" into popular histories in uneven ways through the landscape. And, as he is quick to point out, in 1980s and 1990s England, this knowledge places a heavy focus on urban landscapes.[193] Second, he ties British national histories explicitly to Thatcherite Education reforms. Third, he argues that national narratives about the past have a profound effect on the built environment of the present.

In 1988, Thatcher began to implement the Education Reform Act—to which Section 28 was attached;[194] she states that "[p]erhaps the hardest battle I fought on the

national curriculum was about history."[195] In *The Downing Street Years*, Margaret Thatcher writes about the shortcomings of the British educational system, and mentions her concerns about History (as a subject) in particular. She says, "I distrusted the new 'child-centered' teaching techniques, the emphasis on imaginative engagement rather than learning facts, and the modern tendency to blur the lines of discrete subjects and incorporate them into wider, less definable entities like 'humanities.'"[196] Education, for Thatcher, has hard-and-fast rules and categories; thus it is easy for her to oppose "facts" to "imaginative engagement," easy for her to separate "English" from "History" as subjects for study.

Describing her interest in and attitude toward history, Thatcher says that she imagined her view of history to be "uncontroversial" because history

> requires knowledge of events. It is impossible to make sense of such events without absorbing sufficient factual information and without being able to place matters in a clear chronological framework—which means knowing dates. No amount of imaginative sympathy for historical characters or situations can be a substitute for the initially tedious but ultimately rewarding business of memorizing what actually happened….I felt History must be taught as a separate category.[197]

Later in the same passage, she says of the first proposal, "[t]here was insufficient weight given to British history."[198]

This view, of British history for British subjects, is part of the national register of identity Thatcher supports. Indeed, her sense of family, her sense of obligation, her sense of her place in the world all tie into this notion. Thatcher pairs domestic, private concerns with

a sense of obligation to a larger group, made up of "families" and "community" and "volunteers" who work together to create a nation, to sustain a present and uphold a past. In this way, she gives an imagined English community a heritage, a history, which is both personal and shared, and which works only if the urban geographies of racial and class structures are elided, as I will show later in the chapter.

Heritage, and in particular heritage industries such as "living history" sites, wildlife preserves and historic tours and districts, receive mixed receptions from citizens and politicians as well as historians and cultural critics. On the one hand, Samuel points out, "heritage" "is widely accused of wanting to commodify the past and turn it into tourist kitsch;"[199] on the other, "heritage" emphasizes an often underexamined relationship to the material environment and generates a "large public" extending from tourists to volunteers.[200] Unlike Thatcher, Samuel argues that "[t]he perceived opposition between 'education' and 'entertainment' and the unspoken and unargued-for assumption that pleasure is almost by definition mindless ought not to go unchallenged."[201]

The relationship between history and heritage, then, need not be oppositional and may in fact be closely related. And in both Thatcher's and Hollinghurst's works, heritage plays a strong role in the ways national histories and identities are connected to spaces. Rather than focusing on public sites of recognized interest, however, as I demonstrate below, Thatcher and Hollinghurst place an emphasis on private spaces and materials which work to connect individuals to larger communities. In this way, the private pleasure of memoirs and memorabilia become part of larger national narratives. This connection

between private pleasures and larger historical concerns is also spatially predicated on autonomy.

The ability to govern oneself means not just the ability to be legally free in one's ideas and movements, but also suggests an ability to *control* oneself. And indeed, one of the valences of autonomy is the subjugation of the passions to the will. I would suggest, however, that autonomy *requires* a personal connection to the material world, that autonomy is itself an affective mode of interacting with it. The process by which one claims heritage, by which one establishes limits on which pasts are accessible and capable of representing one's history, is an act of establishing and limiting autonomy, and also constitutes an emotional interaction with the material world. In *Mrs. Dalloway* and the Parliamentary debates, this emotional interaction with London registered as ambivalence; in *The Heat of the Day*, and BBC radio broadcasts, emotional connections to the city registered in the knowability of the materials of the city.

Two of the clearest connections between heritage and national identities in Thatcher's narrative occur first in her discussion of moving into Number 10 Downing Street. Her new residence is of course not fully private, but she writes about it as if inviting her readers into a personal domestic space. She begins by invoking her childhood days, when she apparently lived over a shop, saying that she "liked" that feeling as a girl,[202] and continues by saying that Number 10 evoked a similar response. Describing the private kitchen and dining room, she also focuses on the staff and her habit of making a "cup of Bovril and toast"[203] rather than having proper meals. This description serves several purposes: it connects her to a domestic routine, which prefaces her many remarks about

heteronormative family structures. It creates a sense of her lived space, which is important as she continues her discussion of decorating. It also provides her credentials for adjudicating various kinds of taste, not simply as a matter of personal style but as a means of civic responsibility. She adds that she "was conscious of being the first research scientist to become prime minister" and discusses adding depictions of famous scientists in the "small dining room."[204] Finally, she says:

> I felt strongly that when foreign visitors came to Downing Street they should see something of Britain's cultural heritage. When I came to No 10 all the paintings in the main dining hall were copies. They were replaced.[…] I wanted foreign visitors to No 10 to be…impressed. I was able to borrow some Turners, a Raeburn from Scotland and some pictures from the Dulwich Gallery and these were hung in the White Drawing Room and the main reception room. I also had some fine portraits hung of the nation's heroes; through them you could feel the continuity of British history.[205]

Thatcher's attention to the presentation of British artifacts as a means of establishing cultural identity emphasizes the ways domestic spaces create an impression of shared identities; her deliberate construction of the past as a means of establishing a present is perhaps obvious but still noteworthy. She sees part of her job as Prime Minister as upholding a particular "continuous" history of British accomplishments, figured in the material landscape as busts of scientists, heroes and artists. Thus, the domestic spaces of No 10, just as Big Ben did in *Mrs. Dalloway*, stand in for all of England, decorated with representations from Scotland

and Ireland. Thatcher uses the unique combination of the public and private circumstances of her premiership to bolster her national story.[206]

Hollinghurst's representations of domestic spaces reflect a different history. In order to think about the relationship between private spaces—homes, for instance—and private archives—unpublished journals, privately-owned art objects, photographs and other memorabilia—I begin with the strange title of the novel, "swimming-pool library." It connects to the novel in at least two important ways. First, Will explains that his public school gave prefects the designation "Librarian," and says: "they were chosen on grounds of aptitudes for various tasks…[but] my own aptitude…had been so narrowly, though abundantly, for playing with myself and others, that it was only in my last term…that I was…appointed Swimming-Pool Librarian."[207] The swimming-pool library itself is slang for the changing-room, which Will "still dream[s]" about, longing for the time when there was "no cloying, adult impurity in the lubricious innocence of what we did."[208] Still, Will's "keen interest" in both the pool and in swimming are connected, throughout the novel, to his adult desires for men: as he swims and showers at the gym, he frequently describes the peeling off of swimming trunks as part of the fun of voyeurism.[209] This first reference to the swimming-pool library, then, is connected both to Will's personal history (and nostalgia for his time as a schoolboy) and to his grown-up present.

The second, and equally important, referent of the swimming-pool library comes from Will's visit to Lord Nantwich's house. In the basement are the remains of a Roman bath. It is here that Nantwich asks Will to write about him. Later in the novel, Will's brother-in-law mentions that he has been in the house and seen the pool: then it had "old

leather-bound books going mouldy, and the queerest smell."[210] In addition to the pool having some accoutrements of a library, Richard Dellamora provides another important point of reference for the name. He argues that the Roman frescoes above the swimming pool, which are of two figures that "dissolve…into the broken edge,"[211] represent invented traditions, whereby "the mosaicists have produced cultural capital [which defines] the roles of colonizers." The link between the Romans and Nantwich, who worked in the 1920s in Egypt as part of the colonial project, is clear, and, Dellamora further argues, the site upon which Will is asked to write Nantwich's history "positions the reader to perceive a number of different sites of contestation."[212] The criminalization of homosexuality, the colonial presence of England in African countries, and the postcolonial presence of West Indians and others in London are all part of this domestic site. This private space, then, becomes a place where cultural histories are literally embedded in the groundwork of the home, and thus becomes an archive, a repository, for multiple histories. They also invoke a different set of histories than Thatcher's dining room, which focuses on British citizenry. As I mentioned in the introduction, the "recovery" of London's Roman past was a fairly recent archeological endeavor. Nantwich and Will assert their autonomy through linking their homosexuality to Roman practices and changing the received story of the city by including its homosexual and colonized past. As both harbor sentimental views of the past, this locates them within the same racial and colonial framework as Thatcher's view of autonomy, but it also complicates that view considerably, as she equates it with a "heritage" that erases homosexuality from the landscape.

When Will visits Nantwich's for the first time, he notes that the A-Z guide doesn't list the street: it is quite literally off the known map. Located in a street bombed in the Blitz (but unlike Arthur's familial home in the East End, also an area still affected by the Blitz), Will describes it as belonging to "the invalidish world of Edwardian ghost stories."[213] And inside, the artifacts of the past are equally visible, in its inhabitant, in its art objects and in its architecture. As Nantwich phrases it, "it's quite a little museum I have here…I'm the prime exhibit of course."[214] Nantwich's reference to himself as an exhibit of history, of course, carries with it the history of the criminalization of homosexuality, as well as preserving a Thatcherite "continuity" by projecting into the future the legal restrictions of Section 28's ban on homosexual "materials."

Although Will does not immediately agree to write Nantwich's history, he accepts his archive—his journals, photographs and other memorabilia—to peruse. Will's interest is piqued by the quarto volumes, the "tourist mementos" of Nantwich visiting the Sphinx, riding a camel.[215] He also remarks on the handwriting in the journals, noting that it changes over time, looking "less monkish and stilted, and took on a passionate, cursive air."[216] The materials announce their historicity through these changes of scene and style, and although Will notices that translating these pieces into a history would be "unreadable," his interest is maintained by the narratives of life at school, life in the Sudan.[217] As he sorts through the notebooks, he feels "irritated," expecting them to "fall open at the dirty bits."[218] He reads them primarily in bedrooms—his, as well as the hotel room of his lover Phil—and, frequently, they become either the precursor or antecedent to sex. His reading of these journals, in addition to the voyeuristic element of reading anyone's private journals (coupled

with the very human admission that he looks for the dirty bits first), also has an element of seduction for him. He is reading the private journals of a gay man, and his interest in them is primarily a vicarious pleasure. These pleasures of reading are not explicitly connected to national heritage, but they do connect Will and the reader to a larger and frequently missing legacy of British male homosociality and homosexuality.

Robert Aldrich has shown that homosexual men "often found warm welcome in the colonies"[219] and that colonies provided both jobs and a relatively unmonitored freedom not fully available in England then. Nantwich's journals function as material histories which bring certain configurations of the colonial past into the present. Aldrich points specially to the notion of "empire as a homosexual playground" and the "porosity of boundaries"[220] as two of the frequent configurations of that past. Will's "taste" for black men mentioned earlier participates in the same kind of subordinating and even sentimental attachments Nantwich fosters. Even so, empire is figured in the novel as a kind of lost space, connected to the same heritage-making materials of photographs, memoirs, and even the recurring and profound nostalgia for school days in the novel.

While these valences of empire are evident in Hollinghurst, Thatcher firmly focuses on the ways present spaces provide continuity with the past, but she is less interested in individual specificities. Her interest in the materials of history rests upon how they construct a present British identity. The stakes in Thatcher's interest in presenting a unified sense of British identity, particular to "foreign visitors," become clear when she writes about the Falklands War. In each narrative, as in *Mrs. Dalloway*, the position of "home" is constructed in relationship to foreign environments, but in Thatcher's memoir the emphasis

is on the bounded identity of the country, whereas Hollinghurst foregrounds the "porosity" mentioned by Aldrich. This porosity, which Aldrich believes allows for the possibility of homosocial male relationships of many kinds, also translates into an individual autonomy which is absent from Thatcher's material landscape.

The Now: London Politics

Thatcher's shaping of the government—a Conservative one—during her four terms in office was determined by her belief that free enterprise would reverse the "miserable failure" of social democracy.[221] Her political memoir focuses on the role of England in the global community, although Thatcher's policies also affected the social geography closer to home, especially in London. As Joe Kerr argues in his introduction to the anthology *London from Punk to Blair*, the ensuing restructuring of London throughout the 1980s marks a decisive change in its landscape, its politics, its architecture and its geography. He writes,

> The successful counter-attack by laissez-faire Conservatism against the seemingly permanent post-war social democratic settlement, launched from Downing Street in 1979, in a few short years swept away both the ethics and the institutions of the interventionist, welfare state. Other cities may have experienced the consequences of this resurgence of unfettered and unashamed capitalism in a more dramatic fashion…but it is hard to think of anywhere else that has been re-shaped more comprehensively than London in response to this new ideological vision.[222]

Kerr especially notes the ways capitalism affects both the landscape and the social environments of the city, focusing on the changes to London's municipal government, the Greater London Council (GLC), throughout the 1980s and its eventual abolishment by the Thatcher government in 1986. This insight is a formal acknowledgement of the local and global economies of exchange at work in Chapter One; unlicensed forms of economic exchange are taken up in the next chapter. The County Hall, London's municipal seat, lies across Westminster Bridge from the Commons, the national seat. Under Ken Livingstone, the leader of the GLC from 1981 to 1986, it became a "constant and deliberate irritant" to the Thatcher government,[223] and "aimed to reverse London's economic decline through large-scale municipal socialism."[224] As Kerr points out, London was, after 1986, "the only great city in the Western world without any significant democratic supervision."[225] Without local government, local concerns were adjudicated by national policies.

The juxtaposition of these two political positions—local, liberal and socialist on the one hand; national, conservative and capitalist on the other—is noteworthy because both are ways of articulating the importance of how groups of people act in the world. Social democrats focus on the individual and the welfare of specific communities and tend to foster "interventionist" policies. Conservatives focuses on larger economic projects and privatization of goods and services. Margaret Thatcher, for instance, thought her carefully considered, non-interventionist policies would redeem a faltering country. Here, she writes about socialism as national policy:

> Fair shares somehow always turn out to be small shares. Then, someone has to enforce their fairness; someone else has to check that this fairness does

> not result in black markets or under-the-counter favouritism; and a third person has to watch the first two to make sure that the administrators of fairness end up with no more than their fair share. All this promotes an atmosphere of envy and tittle-tattle. No one who lived through austerity, who can remember snoek, Spam, and utility clothing, could mistake the petty jealousies, minor tyrannies, ill-neighbourliness, and sheer sourness of those years for idealism and equality. [226]

One of the interesting aspects of this passage is the emotional language Thatcher uses to make her argument: reduced to equal shares, socialism is said to provoke both jealousy and, if not paranoia, then certainly a climate of mistrust. These are undesirable emotional qualities to foster in a nation; therefore, socialism must be neither a desirable nor a workable practice. The same logic—arguments that follow a primarily affective mode of reasoning—that here ties socialism to national financial difficulty and emotional ill health, is used throughout *The Downing Street Years* to articulate Thatcher's policies. Her sense of what's "good" for the nation is implicitly tied to feeling financially stable. Economic well-being is indeed perhaps a quotidian aspect of maintaining a sense of freedom, but Thatcher explicitly ties socialism to constraint and deprivation, rather than autonomy.

Thatcher's way of tying socialism to undesirable emotional and economic states of being also has a spatial component: the shares must be visibly and immediately understood as "equal." Unequal shares result in black markets, favoritism and austerity—which is also locatable in the material landscape through the kind and quality of goods available. She connects this understanding to an unfavorable reminiscence of an "austere" and difficult

past, also locatable, one can assume, in the post-war London landscape. In this way she spatializes the effects of socialism by narrating its perceived shortcomings in a material and affective way.

Even as the opposition of local and national, liberal and conservative in these political positions suggests a stark differentiation between them, their intersections prove more interesting and more complicated. For instance, after the demise of the GLC, Ken Livingstone became a Member of Parliament.[227] The "old" conservatives were leery of Thatcherite policies as they focused on the privatization of many services under government control or supervision. The "new" left, viewed as too radical by some liberal politicians as well as conservatives, was dubbed the "loony left" by Thatcherites. Ultimately, these differences in political ideologies reflect different, but not entirely opposed, views of what's important within communities.

Part of what was at stake in these political narratives was autonomy, and autonomy is a function of scale. As I argue in Chapters One and Two, debates about scale are inherently spatial, and in London, seem to result in conflicts between local and national policies that affect residents. Thatcher wanted to bring England into the global economy as an important, democratic, capitalist nation—she envisioned autonomy for England. The GLC, under Ken Livingstone, was "socialist, anti-racist, vigorously pro-gay and lesbian"[228] and wanted local reforms which protected various London minorities. Thatcher positioned herself as someone working for an easily recognized and easily categorized English population. The GLC positioned itself as working for an equally easily recognized but much more difficult-to-categorize London resident. Again, the pivotal difference here is one of local versus

national scale; thus, who had autonomy in London in the 1980s—when, and in what capacity—also becomes a question of scale.

Narrating Urban Spaces

In my first chapter, London's interwar structure generated an ambivalence that stemmed from the difficulties of contending with a violent past that had marked the bodies, the policies and to a small degree, the landscape. In Chapter Two, violence changed the whole city. In the 1980s, riots notably affected London boroughs, rather than the whole city. The Brixton riot of April 1981, for instance, lasted two days, resulted in 300 or so injuries, and damaged buildings and destroyed cars. Margaret Thatcher underplays its significance in her book; she focuses on placing British economics in a global context—she wants England to be seen as a serious economic force, and dissension within the nation undermines her sense of England as necessarily whole, necessarily univocal, nation. However, she does point out that the stop-and-search laws—know as "sus" laws—were re-evaluated under the Scarman Inquiry specifically because of this riot and others whose causes were traced to similar difficulties between police and residents[229] in Southall, London; Moss Side, Manchester; and Toxteth, Liverpool.

Thatcher takes issue with the idea that poverty had any connection to these riots, although she adds that she took "seriously"[230] the claims of racial discrimination by the police. And indeed, she does, after a fashion, next saying that she provides "the kind of equipment the British police now required, which included a greater variety of riot shields, more vehicles, longer truncheons, and sufficient stocks of rubber bullets and water

cannon."[231] In terms of the communities themselves, she says that she worked on large-scale, long-term reforms intended to foster values—and here, she means "common" values of civic decency and responsibility—and a sense of belonging. Writing about her reactions to the conditions in Toxteth, she says:

> I observed that for all that was said about deprivation, the housing there was by no means the worst in the city. I had been told that some of the young people involved got into trouble through boredom and not having enough to do. They had plenty of constructive things to do if they wanted. But you had only to look at the grounds around those houses with the grass untended, some of it almost waist high, and the litter, to see this was a false analysis. I asked myself how people could live in such circumstances without trying to clear up the mess and improve their surroundings. What was clearly lacking was a sense of pride and personal responsibility—something which the state can easily remove but almost never give back.[232]

This argument emphasizes the built landscape as a forced means of making the population legible, of establishing communities, and of connecting "pride" and "personal responsibility" to civic success. The litter and untended grass are evidence that the residents do, in fact, have much to do, if they are so inclined, and if they were so inclined, they would be successful citizens; the onus is theirs. This proposition, of course, seems even remotely reasonable only if poverty is not accepted as an integral part of the urban geography. Later in the passage, Thatcher further clarifies the terms of civic success when she blames the riots for acting "under the guise of social protest" and places a large share of the rest of the

responsibility on local authorities, who "uprooted people from genuine communities and decanted them into badly designed and ill-maintained estates. The results were a steadily increasing rise in crime (among young men) and illegitimacy (among young women)."[233]

In this passage, despite making a claim about "genuine communities" which seems to refer to particular neighborhoods for particular social and ethnic groups, Thatcher continues to downplay the racial make-up of these communities. Instead, she focuses on a series of moralistic burdens: the people who built the neighborhoods are faulted for their shoddy attempts to build a community; the rioters are faulted for their mistaken sense of civic responsibilities; the young people belonging to these communities are faulted for turning to crime and for being "illegitimate"—although that particularly odd and outmoded phrasing seems either to make just the young women, not the men or children, illegitimate, or to hold the young women solely responsible for "illegitimate" children.

Without bringing too much pressure to bear on Thatcher's use of "illegitimacy," the connection between good citizens, economic well-being, and sexual practices is an important one. Anna Marie Smith, for instance, has shown not only that Thatcher "reduced local government to a chaotic state through drastic funding cuts" but also that discourse about local governments "was so thoroughly intertwined with racial and sexual codes that local government autonomy became equated with subversive black activism and the homosexual abuse of children."[234] Thatcher's narrative of the riots, which all but erases racial considerations, emphasizes incorrect social conduct in the form of crime and "illegitimate" coupling. Furthermore, by suggesting that the problems have been created by local mismanagement—from municipal governments down to irresponsible or otherwise

recalcitrant residents—rather than national policies, she implicitly rejects the idea that national racisms play a part in these urban geographies and histories. Finally, by focusing on "pride" and the tending of lawns, she also inscribes a familiar middle-class narrative on the landscape, which simultaneously erases the difficult circumstances of poverty and reinforces the narratives which make middle-class life and heterosexual familial bonds essential parts of community-building. Autonomy, in this narrative, then, is predicated on a clearly defined national character imbuing the landscape with certain acceptable ways of living, moving, and being.

The way this narrative shifts attention from national considerations to local and/or personal ones has two distinct ramifications. First, in Thatcher's narrative, the focus is on the responsibility of the residents to construct a community and to observe the limits of personal freedom imposed by the autonomies afforded by self-governance. Thatcher's way of narrating the national at the expense of the local—of erasing race when discussing the scenes of riots, of rhetorically pairing local governments with failed socialist agendas which also participate in racist and homophobic fears—is a way of making the local insignificant, of erasing the details of urban lives. Second, her language invokes an emotional tie between appropriate, responsible actions and appropriate forms of coupling, which links them to a larger, national narrative of autonomy. Indeed, as Sara Ahmed argues,

> heterosexuality becomes a script that binds the familial with the global [and it] is this narrative, of coupling as a condition for the reproduction of life, culture and value that explains the slide in racist narratives between the fear

> of strangers and immigrants (xenophobia), the fear of queers (homophobia) and the fear of miscegenation (as well as other illegitimate couplings).[235]

If Thatcher's way of narrating the space of the riots erases the ways race marks out those spaces and inserts a spatialized discourse of heterosexual familial ties, Hollinghurst's novel reinserts them in ways that challenge these codes. Will does not travel to the same areas marked as spaces of contention by Thatcher (and thereby marked out nationally and even globally as trouble "spots" which are easily locatable and confined), but he does notice some of the ways race and national identity intersect in other unremarked and therefore seemingly uncontested urban London landscapes. Traveling to the East End in search of his West Indian lover, Arthur Hope, Will notes the ways this landscape is inscribed with poverty and racial tension:

> Rainwater and the overflow pipes of lavatories had dribbled chalky stains across the black panels, and above the concrete ruins of the windows weeds and grass grew from the slime…At the end of [an] alley a group of skinheads were playing around, kicking beercans against the wall and kneeing each other in spasmodic mock-fights."[236]

Later in the passage, he finds himself reluctant to ring a doorbell:

> It was horrible to be cowed by circumstances…A minute later I burnt off my adrenalin leaping down the stairs—which were bleakly concrete, like the long exit stairways at the back of cinemas.…At the turn of each flight "NF" had been scrawled, with a pendant saying "Kill or Niggers" or "Wogs Out" I

> thought with yearning of the Hopes, whom I did not know, forced to contain their anger, contempt and hurt in such a world. [237]

In this case, the urban landscape is clearly marked both by poverty—in the guise of badly designed sewer systems and cinderblock projects—and by racism—in the form of National Front graffiti and, more subtly, in the "cow[ing] circumstances." Will's discomfort at being wealthy and white—and easily identifiable as both—also emphasizes racial and class differences. It is in this place that Will is later marked as homosexual and beaten up by several young skinheads. This urban narrative thus reinscribes Thatcher's narrative about neighborhoods in which racial tensions exist not only by explicitly tying violence against homosexuals to racial violence but also by emphasizing how economic poverty exacerbates that violence.

In addition to foregrounding the ways race marks particular neighborhoods, the novel also addresses some of the ways race is marked, in more complicated ways, across Britain. The opening lines of the novel take place on the underground, thus marking out how movements—small ones, like traveling across town, but also large ones, like the diaspora resulting from colonialism—mark terrain. Will says: "I was getting a taste for black names, West Indian names; they were a kind of time-travel."[238] Interestingly, these "West Indian names" are not what one might expect; instead of conjuring up the syllables and consonant shifts of non-European origins, Will thinks of names like "Archibald, Ernest, Lionel, Hubert"—and calls them "Edwardian."[239] The people—the men—Will imagines having these names now are in England, in London, are black and British, and thus are correctly "in place," markers which clearly bespeak a colonial history, a postcolonial present.

In this passage, the temporal displacement of objects—British names and, by extension, British people—from one space to another (from the colonial West Indies to London in the 1980s) happens only mentally: in Will's mind and in the mind of the reader. But this mental/temporal displacement calls into question the spatial fixity of being simply "West Indian" or "British," and creates a sense of the complexity of the locations of such identities. It also explicitly connects London's colonial history to the present, suggesting that it still operates in the landscape and in the imagination. Furthermore, even though this process of naming comes from a white male born into peerage, this musing suggests an awareness of the paternalistic urge of England's colonial history as well as a predatory sexual delight in those dynamics.

Will's "taste" for "black names," in addition to providing racial and historical markers, also connotes an important sexual preference for black men. From Will's opening ride home on the subway, his means of organizing and orienting himself and his life in physical space center around aesthetics and sexual desire. Will's tastes, and his sensory engagement with and judgments about his lived environment, are the primary basis of the narrative. Later in the opening chapter for instance, Will gives an "account of himself": "the sex-sharp little circuits of discos and pubs and cottages" and contrasts it with the "romance of himself, which transformed all these mundanities with a protective glow."[240] Will's connections to London urban geographies are inflected with desire that belongs to a category of "illegitimacy" distasteful to Thatcher. She mentions neither homosexuality nor AIDs—although they are frequently intertwined narratives in the 1980s—anywhere in her political memoir. Will's desires and autonomy counterpoint Thatcherite narratives about

English spaces and ways of living in part by making both desire and autonomy visible and in part by presenting a familiar geography inflected by those visible movements. Thatcher's emotional arguments by no means preclude desire as an important part of the ways urbanscapes can be narrated, but, as seen above, her sense of appropriate forms of desire are connected to her sense of privileged heterosexual propriety. In contrast, Hollinghurst's equally emotional argument rewrites desire and colonialism back into the cityscape. In *Mrs. Dalloway* and in the Parliamentary debates, race and colonialism are written into the landscape in much more frugal ways and with much less specificity. In Chapter Four, problems of colonialism give way to problems of immigration.

Personal Space and Freedom

Written in 1988, *The Swimming-Pool Library* is set in 1983. Many critics have noted the significance of the year to the events in the novel. Richard Dellamora, for instance, argues that London in 1983 is the setting for the novel because it highlights British state persecution of homosexuality—a history "hidden" from Will Beckwith, the protagonist, until near the end.[241] That history moves both backwards and forwards: the novel references prosecutions of homosexuals in the 1960s, and was published just after Section 28 was enacted, which prohibited "promoting homosexuality by teaching or publishing material."[242] These legal circumstances shape the novel and Will's life in perhaps surprising ways, since there are very few direct references to the 1960s prosecutions, and none to Section 28. But, as Sara Ahmed explains, "to refuse to be compelled by the narratives of ideal heterosexuality in one's orientation to others is still to be affected by those narratives; they work to script

one's orientation as a form of disobedience."[243] The near-invisibility of these restricting circumstances work to emphasize Will's volition—his "will"—as an act of defiance which marks out spaces of movement and restriction, spaces of resistance and compliance, spaces of comfort and unease.

Disobedience is a matter, then, of refusal, of choice, of freedoms which are made evident by virtue of what circumscribes them. Will's autonomy is established from the outset: the first lines of the novel, which have him traveling on the Underground, mark him as a man who does not need to work, who can travel freely, who has a range of possible movements. As Hollinghurst states in an interview, he wanted to make the novel take place entirely underground, but it became untenable.[244] This impulse to set the novel in a world both hidden and under the surface of mainstream movements hints at some of the ways disobedience is an uncomfortable position to maintain. But Will takes pleasure in his life, particularly in his unabashed and open pursuit of men.

Sara Ahmed writes, "[t]o be comfortable is to be so at ease with one's environment that it is hard to distinguish where one's body ends and the world begins."[245] She argues that heteronormativity is a form of "public comfort" and that discomfort is feeling "out of place, awkward, unsettled."[246] In *The Swimming-Pool Library*, Will is comfortable in particular surroundings—the Underground, the gym (especially the gym pool and showers), local gay pubs—in part because the novel constructs an urban map which exists in a kind of "underground," in spaces under the discomfiting surface of things. But Will's movements are uncomfortably affected by relevant histories as is forecast in the ways Will relates to his surroundings. Early in the novel, he both acknowledges and laughs off this duality, saying

he is "tugged between two versions of myself…so that I was both of the world and beyond its power."[247]

The next scene further emphasizes Will's dual position as a man who believes himself to be both in the world and beyond its power. Walking in the park, Will cruises an "Arab boy"[248] and, unsure of whether or not his intentions have been understood and reciprocated, he tests them by entering a public lavatory. Once inside, he finds Lord Nantwich suffering from a stroke and gives him CPR. This small act sets off a chain of events which works to make invisible histories legible to Will—and to the reader—through the material landscape. Lord Nantwich, as Will discovers at the end of the novel, was jailed in the 60s for "indecent acts" and the man responsible for his incarceration is Will's grandfather, Lord Beckwith.

In addition to this larger plot development, the geographic site of Will's first encounter with Lord Nantwich is important. Mark Turner has argued that the history of men cruising for men often concerns men getting arrested in public toilets. This is because the laws and the arrests "have provided material for historians who have been able to map in detail the sexual geographies of queer men."[249] He also notes, however, that locating such a geography in such a way can "prevent particular stories from being told" and that "[d]isruption is the key to understanding the queer critical turn."[250] When Will encounters Lord Nantwich in a public lavatory and gives him mouth-to-mouth, these histories are both invoked and altered. Several disruptions are at work in this scene: the anticipated sexual encounter with a young boy turns into a CPR session with an old man, amusingly written in language suggesting an erotic encounter. Second, the geographies of surveillance and arrest

Turner mentions are indeed at work, but only as they are embodied by Nantwich and embedded in the scene; thus they can be understood only retroactively. Finally, Will's desire to enter the lavatory accords with an oft-mentioned, stereotypical view of gay male behavior, but the events that take place in the bathroom and Will's reactions work both with and against that trope.

Will has this to say about men cruising public toilets: "I felt a faint revulsion—not disapproval, but a fear of one day being like that…What long investment they made for what paltry returns…I was not shy but too proud and priggish to take my place with them."[251] Will figures his reluctance in terms of desire: he hopes never to be reduced to enticing sexual contact this way, preferring to rely on his youth, charm and looks. Will's desire—and particularly his longing to be a desiring and desirable sexual being—is configured simultaneously in terms of disobedience and freedom. On the one hand, Will feels comfortable enough to choose an aesthetic, rather than a moralistic, response to cruising in lavatories and thus reflects a familiar trope of male homosexuality, one in which delight about public sex and sex with strangers figures prominently. On the other, the danger of policing, of being identified as someone who cruises for men in these places, is, if not a real threat for Will, a tacitly acknowledged geography of gay cruising.

Will prefers to cruise the crowds and spaces of the London Underground. Nearly every chapter has some passage about the Tube; the subway is a public space where Will can look at and pick up men. Will always gets an erection when he rides the tube or the bus: the aesthetic pleasures Will has while travelling, the vibrations and the people-watching all contribute to his state.[252] The anticipation of a returned glance and the comedy of enticing a

stranger to sit near him are both quotidian pieces of Will's experiences on the Underground. Here, he describes a successful pick-up:

> [W]e held each other's gaze for a long moment before each modestly looked away, though with the evident intention of looking back again after a few seconds…[A]t Notting Hill Gate the seat beside mine became empty and…my older admirer…seemed about to take the seat beside me [when]…the boy from the Corry…occupied the seat toward which his rival was already lowering his suited rump. Confusion and apology were inadmissible in so bold an action, and he wisely comported himself as if there had never been any question of anyone but him sitting beside me. I drummed my fingers on my knee, and turned to him with a slow, sly grin. The other man's face grew clenched and red, and he barged away to another part of the car. [253]

Even in this passage, the stops the train makes, the people getting on and off, are part of the ways Will reads the space. He is *not* misreading the glances of these men, nor the cat-and-mouse game of sexual interest. He is at home in this landscape, he feels autonomous, and thus accurately recognizes others' desire for him. Will picks up this "boy from the Corry"—Colin—and takes him back to his home for "some efficient sex."[254]

If the pleasures of the Underground lie in the experiences on the train and at the stops, the dangers of the Underground lie in movement, in the shifting of terrain from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Colin, the boy Will picks up on the Tube, is the same person who later arrests James for public indecency, and at the end of the novel, Will searches in vain for

photographic evidence which will indict Colin and save James. Will's interest in and fascination with the physicality of the Tube extends only to the places he knows intimately. When he is in unfamiliar territory, he is more reticent. For instance, when he goes to Arthur's house in the East End, Will is utterly out of his element. He begins reading his Firbanks novel, but unlike other Tube trips, this time he focuses on the landscape: "feeling apprehensive about Arthur, I looked out of the window at the widening suburbs, the housing estates, the distant gasometers, the mysterious empty tracts of fenced-in waste land...Everywhere the impression was of desertion, as if…the people had made off."[255] This particular view, coloured as it is by Will's apprehension, becomes more strange as Will steps off the train:

> I was amazed to think it was the city where I lived…The culture shock was compounded as a single-decker bus approached showing the destination 'Victoria and Albert Docks'…To the people here the V and A was not, as it was in the slippered west, a vast terracotta-encrusted edifice, whose echoing interiors held ancient tapestries…and sequences of dead and spotlit rooms taken wholesale from the houses of the past. How different my childhood Sunday afternoons would have been if…my father had sent me to the docks to talk with stevedores.[256]

These contrasting views of London, one in which the V & A is a Victorian-era museum, and one in which the V & A are docks, indicate that Will is out of his element both geographically and socially. This view of the docks, which he describes as strewn with "modern warehouses…and often the train ran on a high embankment at the level of a

bedroom windows," concurs with Woolf's descriptions written nearly sixty years earlier: "If we turn and go past the anchored ships towards London, we see surely the most dismal prospect in the workd. The banks of the river are lined with dingy, decrepit-looking warehouses." Parallelling the observations Woolf makes in *The London Scene*, that the docks are associated both with international trade and crippling poverty, Will sees them as modern monstrosities near which only the poorest live. Will's comments reflect the common assumption that Thatcher's renovation of the Docklands—a contentious, ambitious project culminating in Canary Wharf—would create worse conditions for those living in the area.[257]

The fact that Will can delight as much in the museum as in the docks is part of his charm (both for himself and for his readers), but he has a keen sense of dislocation and disorientation as he "veers" into the same "outlying areas" he earlier appreciated from a distance. Up close, these outlying areas are bleak and imbued with the violent racism Will abhors. As Will decides that he should meet Arthur on "neutral" ground, he turns to leave, but he is badly beaten, the price he pays for being out-of-place.[258] He even initially attempts to assess the skinheads aesthetically and sexually, saying, "Cretinously simplified to booted feet, bum and bullet head, they had some, if not all, of the things one was looking for."[259] As he is beaten, however, he twice remarks, "It was actually happening to me."[260]

With these words, Will begins to mark his terrain not simply as one that provides aesthetic and sexual pleasure; he acknowledges a present and a history that limit his autonomy. This is the first time Will directly acknowledges that homophobic violence happens, and happens to people like him. It is the first time that the duality of being both

"of the world and beyond it" becomes uncomfortable. As he comes to terms with his brutal beating, his relationship to the landscape changes: he thinks, "The pavements were normal, the passers-by had preoccupied, harmless expressions. Yet to me, it was a glaring world, treacherous with lurking alarm. A universal violence had been disclosed to me, and I saw it everywhere."[261]

Because of the ways spaces are configured on a smaller scale, if Hollinghurst's narrative both participates in and refuses the restraints imposed by Thatcherite national ones, how do national autonomies work affectively on a large scale? One way is through the presentation of past histories that emphasize the unities of personal and political freedoms as a common cause, even as national histories often subjugate one to the other in service of that unification. Another is by imbuing particular, common spaces with narratives about those spaces so that they come to stand in for particular freedoms. In my introduction, I argue that vulnerability is an acknowledged part of the contemporary London landscape because that landscape reflects an affective history of destruction through World War II narratives that only partially accommodated felt reactions to the city. In Chapter One, ambivalence is a crucial affective component of acknowledging London's current problems of integrating the local and the national. In Chapter Three, war narratives rewrite intimacy—if not public sexual displays—as public affective responses to war.

Chapter Four

Belonging at Home: London and International Citizens

In each of the preceding three chapters, knowing who belongs and who doesn't isn't really a contested subject: the question of belonging either remains invisible or is clearly marked by differences of ethnicity, country of origin, or race. In this chapter, however, the difficult history of decolonization and immigration policies mentioned at the close of Chapter Two come to bear directly on the London landscape. In contemporary London, who is verifiably a part of the city and who isn't is an important part of its affective dimension. Turning from *The Swimming Pool Library* and *The Downing Street Years*, which highlight the ways the changing urban landscape of 1980s London gave rise to conflicting sensations of autonomy that hinged upon economic and social stability and order, in this chapter, I examine sensations of belonging in and to the contemporary city by pairing Stephen Frears's 2002 film *Dirty Pretty Things* with documents pertaining to UK immigration policies.

Frears's film is a thriller, made for a popular, general audience. Okwe (Chiwetel Ejiofor), a Nigerian national living illegally in London, works both as a night deskman in the Baltic Hotel, in Shoreditch, and as a gypsy cab driver; in Nigeria, he was a doctor. He shares accommodations with Senay (Audrey Tautou), a Turkish woman who works on the cleaning staff at the hotel and is in the country as a refugee—thus, she has a legal relationship to London and the UK, but is also working illegally.[262] One evening at work in the hotel, Okwe investigates an overflowing toilet, and finds a human heart causing the blockage. He

uncovers a scheme concocted by the hotel owner, Sneaky (Sergi López), who is selling British passports to illegal immigrants for one of their kidneys; the surgeries are being performed in his hotel. Okwe is coerced into performing surgery for Sneaky when Senay agrees to sell her kidney for a passport that will allow her to travel to New York. Senay and Okwe double-cross Sneaky, removing his kidney in the process, and each leaves the country, separately, at the movie's close. While these events may seem fantastic—these are the elements of a thriller, after all—what is most striking about the film is how the characters react to these events as components of a daily existence that is rendered insidiously, quietly, and invisibly and harrowing. As they work to support themselves, they establish social networks that extend across the neighborhood; the movie sets up the characters as important pieces of the spatial configuration of the city, even though Okwe and Senay ultimately make decisions to leave London and the UK.

Contemporary immigration narratives about London, such as Michael Winterbottom's *In This World*, tend to focus on the difficulties of belonging, of finding spaces and ways of supporting cultural rituals not easily transported from one country to another, and fitting in—or failing to fit in—with new people and new surroundings, of the difficulties of social and spatial adaptation and accommodation. Sara Ahmed argues that nationality and citizenship "demand[…]that migrants 'take on' the character of the national ideal [of loving the country]: becoming British is indeed a labor of love for the migrant, whose reward is the 'promise' of being loved in return."[263] The act of leaving one place and coming to another is an emotional one; Ahmed ties the emotions of immigration to a national narrative that requires loving a new nation which will also, in turn, requite return

that love. In *Dirty Pretty Things*, however, the communities and sense of belonging work well precisely because the economies of exchange, the relationships between the people and the terms under which they are conducted, are all extralegal—they function not in terms of love of the country, since no promise of love seems to exist on either side of the relationship, but in terms of more immediate needs: work, support, comfort and acceptance. Unlike Woolf's narrative of London, in which legal forms of exchange and commerce become the means by which the everyday is inserted into national narratives, in this film, the forms of exchange have become synonymous with a national strategy and policy. They are undermined by the black market an by barter arrangements in local communities which reinscribe the personal within London's larger, global consumerism. Legal, sanitized relationships to the city and the nation are rare in this film: the film is informed by temporary social structures of various kinds, and thus the sense of belonging, while also temporary, is formed on its own ground.

In their introduction to an essay collection about diasporic communities, *Uprootings/Regroundings*, Sara Ahmed, Claudia Casteñada, Anne Marie Porter and Mimi Sheller outline a method for re-connecting ideas of home and migration. Rather than positing them as dichotomies, they turn to the "material, embodied, affective" qualities of spaces in order to examine communities of belonging. As they write, "[t]he affectivity of home is bound up with the temporality of the home, with the past, the present and the future. It takes time to feel at home."[264] The relationship between citizenship and belonging and therefore between judicial systems and people who actually migrate, then, is one which hinges upon varying definitions of belonging—legal definitions do determine who is

sanctioned to feel as if s/he belongs, but that does not mean that people who have extra-legal relationships to a place cannot also feel as if they belong. The sensation of belonging, according to cultural critic and British peer Bhikhu Parekh, is simultaneously bound up with and separate from political doctrines.

What it feels like to belong in a city and what it actually means to belong in a city are related concepts: what it "means" suggests a legal relationship to the city. Legal citizens and other recognized, legal visitors have judicial rights of "belonging." These rights include the use and resources of governmental agencies, national health insurance, and access to public libraries and school systems; they also denote obligations: to pay local and national taxes, to follow the rules and regulations of the city, to take part in civic duties such as voting. The sensation of belonging is loosely tied to these rights and responsibilities to the larger community, but is centered less around the public structures of voting, tax paying, education and services, than on informal networks of family, friends, neighbors and co-workers. Belonging is inherently a social sensation, one fostered—or impeded—by the physical and social structure of a city and its boroughs and neighborhoods.

Recently, the focus on "belonging in London" has emphasized the continued examination of questions and difficulties surrounding "multiculturalism," and thus has also become linked to EU policies, immigration laws, and racial tensions and related considerations. Legal definitions of who can belong, who is desired by specific communities to belong, and who is prevented from belonging thus intersect with international communities, social networks, and real and perceived cultural differences. In order to examine sensations of belonging to London as a post-colonial, global city, then, I turn not to

legal citizenship and entry, but to those whose sensations of belonging highlight the spaces of the city which are underexamined sites of extralegal social networks, extralegal forms and sensations of belonging and disenfranchisement.

The Unreal and the Invisible

In order to make his film, Frears says that he had to create a fictionalized London, pieced together from London locations—particularly Dalton, in the borough of Hockney, a working-class district, with a large immigrant Turkish population—and constructed sets. In his commentary accompanying the DVD version of the film, Frears cites the bombings of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001 as creating the need for this film to be shot in this way. He says, "they won't let you near London airports; that all goes down badly, so [films] are forced to be less realistic and more genre-based, or more artificial." The resultant picture of London, while more stylized or genre-based, as Frears phrases it, is thus the means by which Frears and Steven Knight can narrate this view of London and its inhabitants. Similarly, when casting, Frears worked to hire actors and actresses for whom English was not their native language. Paying less attention to their country of origin—Audrey Tatou is French, not Turkish—allows Frears to construct a sense of the characters' struggle to belong in places where they cannot be easily understood. This fictionalized space thus becomes a means of making a real part of London life more visible.

The specific sites for the movie—a morgue in an unnamed hospital, the Baltic Hotel, a sweatshop, a gypsy cab stand, a parking garage—all participate in this fictionalized "set" of London. Although Frears used many real locations, he argues that London is "overfilmed"

and that, in order to get away from "tourist" shots, he needed both to work outside the square mile of The City and Westminster and also to construct sets. Thus, for instance, when Sneaky brings illegally bought truffles through the back door of another much larger and fancier hotel, Frears points out both that the exterior shot is of the Savoy—an angle usually neither seen nor usually filmed—and that the interior shot is a set because the Savoy kitchen "must be much bigger than that." This scene is an important one because it highlights the interconnectedness of the illegal networks in the film. In *Dirty Pretty Things*, the economic exchange of the people and/or their body parts across borders—and the parts are explicitly valued much more than the actual people—requires such networks. Sneaky brings the kitchen manager truffles, then asks him about Okwe: "He's one of yours, isn't he, which means he came through Amsterdam?" Sneaky uses his connections to find out more information about Okwe—his real name, his reason for leaving Nigeria, his profession, his travels—and then barters this information for Okwe's services. The usual pathways of consumerist connection—visitor to hotel, food from truck to hotel kitchen—are thus circumvented, and extralegal pathways—illegal truffles brought as a gift, information exchanges based on illegal activities, from profitable illegal entry points in Amsterdam to London—are made visible.

These networks work not just for coercion and power structures, but also for more local, more community-based and altruistic measures. Okwe's friendship with Guo Yi, the morgue worker, is important to both of them. They rely on one another: they play chess together, they talk frankly with one another—more frankly than most of the other characters in the film—and Guo Yi helps Okwe. As a legal immigrant, he is more familiar with

London's networks than Okwe is, and helps him to understand both the limits and the uses of his invisibility. Okwe is perfectly capable of stealing the appropriate medicines from the hospital stores—he poses as a janitor, knowing full well how invisible cleaning staff tend to be—but when he needs surgical supplies as well, it is Guo Yi who lends him a badge. When Okwe makes a face about the likeness, Guo Yi simply says "Black is black," underscoring how his invisibility can cloak him. Invisibility, in London, may not highlight belonging, but it can be a component of it.

Guo Yi refers to this invisibility again when he sews up the pockets of a dead Chinese man, explaining that it's unusual for a Chinese man to have no family to claim him, and that "If he's Buddhist, I'm paving the way to eternal happiness; if he's an aetheist, I've ruined a suit that no one will ever see." These words and this action carry important implications for the film: those who feel as if they belong to a community—as Okwe, Senay, Guo Yi and Juliette do—often believe that the actions they take on behalf of that community are more important than their visibility. The quality of belonging, as we have seen in Chapter Two, necessitates actions which respond to that sensation.

Legal Problems: Immigration and Belonging

In his foreword to the 2002 white paper "Secure Borders, Safe Havens," British Home Secretary David Blunkett writes: "[t]o enable integration to take place, and to value the diversity it brings, we need to be secure within our sense of belonging and identity and therefore to be able to reach out and to embrace those who come to the UK. Those who wish to work and to contribute to the UK, as well as those who seek to escape from

persecution, will then receive the welcome they deserve."[265] This white paper sought to change the immigration act of 1999, given both increased security measures at borders after the events in America on September 11th and EU regulations calling for more uniform immigration policies and more attention to human rights issues. It purports to find a balance between "belonging and identity" and "reaching out to those who come to the UK." That balance rests on issues of governmental control: it tries to assuage fears of an immigrant "invasion"—language which has long been in practice in first-world countries to describe those who come from elsewhere on work permits, through marriage,[266] or for asylum. Thus, the primary emphasis is on the comfort of existing legal British citizens rather than on a commitment to human rights or of the welfare of asylum seekers. This emphasis on comfort is not just because Blunkett was the Home Secretary of the UK in 2002—a country which witnessed massive demonstrations against sending troops to Iraq after 9/11 and demonstrated a deep unease about allowing foreign nationals from other countries to live and work among them—but also because UK's immigration policy has a long history of preserving an emotional ease for the British community, narrowly conceived along ethnic and cultural lines, as has been evident in all of these chapters. Of course, the white paper announces itself as a harbinger of a revised look at citizenship:

> Common citizenship is not about cultural uniformity, nor is it born out of some narrow and out-dated view of what it means to be "British." The Government welcomes the richness of the cultural diversity which immigrants have brought to the UK–our society is multi-cultural, and is shaped by its diverse peoples. We want British citizenship positively to

> embrace the diversity of background, culture and faiths that is one of the hallmarks of Britain in the 21st Century.[267]

This is an important step for the white paper to take; it acknowledges a difficult legislative past when it comes to immigration. And even though this white paper and the resulting, passed immigration legislation are fundamentally about controlling populations rather than embracing their entry, they continue the shift away from traditional UK immigration legislation, which was usually uncritically motivated by xenophobia. In fact, as Rosemary Sales has pointed out,

> Blair's Labor administration has prided itself on its progressive policies on race equality, while pursuing restrictive policies on asylum. This distinction is embodied in the Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000. It extended anti-discrimination legislation into the public sector but excluded those who make decisions on immigration cases, allowing them to make blanket decisions on the basis of country of origin, a clause described by one senior journalist as "the bluntest piece of state-sponsored ethnic discrimination in 35 years." (Hugo Young, *Guardian*, 24 April 2001).[268]

The attention placed on asylum seekers and refugees as a particular subsection of immigrants, then, has both made them more visible, even in popular culture genres, and led to more measures of institutional control. Sara Ahmed has demonstrated some of the relationships against which British national identities are supported, and how that support reinforces a sense of cohesion. She argues that the nation "constructs itself as ideal in its

capacity to assimilate other into itself, to make itself 'like itself' by taking in others who appear differently."[269] While official spatial narratives tend to construct belonging and nationality as inseparable categories (which of course plays into the hyphenated constructions we saw in Chapters One and Two), unofficial narratives tend to construct more fluid, more locally space-based criteria.

In *Dirty Pretty Things*, the relationship between the migrant and the nation is murkier because these residents are illegal citizens: they are required neither to love the country nor to be grateful. Guo Yi, on the other hand, is a legal citizen, but he does not feel a reciprocal love of or from the country; thus, he befriends and helps Okwe, for whom the nation is not an object of love, and so he must instead focus his love on the more particular, an individual, not because the two propositions are mutually incompatible but because Okwe's need to belong has to be somehow expressed. (This unrequited love for a country also explains why Guo Yi becomes such an interesting kind of informant for Okwe—a critical outsider who knows that his sense of belonging, his sense of community, does not quite follow the path prescribed of the newly-English. Guo Yi understands too much about the intersections of cultural belongings to be uncritical of British ideals and identities, but he also knows enough to claim the right to call London home. Neither Okwe nor Senay use that word to describe their hovel—Okwe, at the end of the film, tells his daughter he's coming home—but they do establish genuine, working communities and relationships.

Senay, in contrast to Guo Yi and Okwe, is looking for asylum, but not for a surrogate country. She has no reason to prefer the UK to another country; in fact she says she'd prefer New York to London because she has a cousin there. The specificity of these

large cities, while well-known and clichéd sites of emigration, also hints at the ways they are less abstract to Senay than the countries in which they are located. She thinks more about London than about England. Toward the end of the film, when Okwe tries to give her a vision of what she'll see in New York, Senay says, "It won't be like that. I know it won't be like that." She's not responding to the image Okwe presents, which is largely about lines of yellow taxis waiting outside the airport and seems neither inaccurate nor an overt promise of a new, happy life. Rather, she's responding to her experience of London, to the ways her life has already been difficult and to the ways her life will continue to be difficult. Any promise of what a city will "be like" is an empty promise because the city can be surprising. For Senay, these surprises have taken the form of both friendship and betrayal: she and Okwe understand, respect and love one another, but she's also discovered these through the various betrayals by the men for whom she's worked. Sexually assaulted by the owner of a sweatshop, then coerced into sex with Sneaky, Senay understands that no promises made about her life in a new city or new country can be trusted.

Dirty Pretty Things is careful to construct realities on a small scale, in terms of New York and London, in terms of an unnamed Turkish village, a seedy hotel in Shoreditch, a morgue in an unnamed local hospital. Only Okwe is not given a specific place to live, perhaps because his country is figured only as turmoil—initially, when he talks about his sadness, for instance, he says only, "It is an African story." This ambiguous phrasing seems to stand in for a myriad of colonial and post-colonial failures and suffering. Okwe, however, explicitly places blame on neither Nigeria or England, but on specific people, even referring to the death of his wife and his subsequent framing by the Nigerian government for her

death in terms of particular officials, not corrupt or wayward institutions. The difficulties Okwe and Senay undertake and undergo are also particular, and while they resonate with certain political features of the legacy of colonial rule in African countries or the problems facing European but not EU citizens attempting to live in EU countries, the focus is firmly on specified human relationships and choices.

There is, in fact, a potentially disturbing lack of historical specificity throughout the film: Okwe's Nigerian origin seems somewhat random. We know that he has lived in Lagos and has been to New York, that he came to London through illegal channels in Amsterdam, that he's changed his name because he's wanted by the Nigerian government. All of these facts support the storyline and give Okwe a reason to be a worldly, educated, illegal immigrant. But we have so little specificity that when Juliette (Sophie Okonedo) asks twice if he's seen a lion, her question serves as much to represent him simply as "African" as it does to highlight a particular cultural stereotype. Senay, too, is given no history: we know she's Turkish, from a small village, but we know nothing of her history: how she came to London, why she left Turkey. On one hand, these gaps in the characters' histories are erasures of important cultural orientations; however, I also think they are important gaps in our knowledge of these characters because any history we may have of them would serve to diminish that they do in fact belong in London, have in fact established a working sense of community that doesn't need to be described in terms of other influences. It would be hard, for instance, to get a sense of Senay's or Okwe's departures from their countries of origin or their arrivals in London without depicting London as merely a stop along the way to a proper legal home. The film constructs a London that is central, not tangential to the plot

line; similarly, it would be difficult to include those parts of the story without creating the "white people" Frears excised from the film. The result, I believe, is that viewers are forced to take in these characters and their situations on the film's own terms, and those terms construct the characters as belonging to a spatial network of friends and co-workers in London's Shoreditch.

Dirty Pretty Things, as Stephen Frears phrased it in an interview, "went to a lot of trouble to ethnically cleanse [itself] of all white people."[270] Not only does the film erase most of the familiar London landmarks, but it also presents a series of social networks rarely seen. The hotel workers, for instance, are seen without the hotel guests; the movie seems to take place in an empty hotel, a fictional space Frears creates in order to focus the film on the characters and their relationships to one another. Thus, Senay and the other cleaning staff are seen coming to work, entering the building and making sure their faces are seen by the security camera, identifying themselves as they come in to work. They are not seen entering rooms or cleaning, just coming into the hotel, together. Similarly, Juliette, the prostitute is seen more often chatting with Okwe than with an anonymous potential trick. Okwe spends more time at the gypsy cab shopfront than in a cab, and when he works at the hotel, he is either alone or talking with his friends—again, no hotel guests appear. The only people seen entering the hotel as visitors are the immigration officials investigating Senay.

Together, these scenes create several, related, effects: first, and perhaps most importantly, they create a sense of specific communities which have developed, useful, productive relationships to London and the UK despite their usual invisibility, their illegality, their illegitimacy. It is precisely because *Dirty Pretty Things* does not tell a story

framed by the predominant, white ethnicities or by their perceived economic privileges that it works so beautifully in conveying a sense of belonging. Neither the specific characters in the film nor the film's larger implications for immigrant/refugee/illegal entrant relationships and communities in London are framed against a familiar backdrop of British accents, British landmarks, British officials—there are only two Immigration Enforcement officials, for instance. By evading most of these familiar dichotomies, Frears and Knight (the screenwriter) have constructed a powerful tale of what it means to belong in London. If, as this dissertation has been arguing, the everyday, the unacknowledged, has some bearing on the construction of national identities, then this film is a particularly important one (not the only one, of course). The construction of a national identity, as we have seen in Chapter Three, is one which functions *against* other constructions: boundaries limiting "our" space from "theirs," codified national preferences about religion, legal status, citizenship, etc, all form the infrastructure of a conceived "nation." But the people who make up that nation are equally important. None of the characters in the film seems loyal to nations; they are loyal to people, to social constructions and private senses of decency that allow them to act in certain ways but not others, to make choices that can be understood only in terms of belonging to a series of extra-legal commitments. The local, networked spaces of home, hotel, hospital and cab stand—all places of transition or temporariness—are informal sites of economic and social exchange; they construct a different way of belonging to the land than the official narratives can accommodate.

Finding Friends: Immigrants and Social Networks

In the dryly titled "The Social Networks of Asylum Seekers and the Dissemination of Information About Countries of Asylum," a report commissioned by the British Home Office in 2002, Khalid Koser and Charles Pinkerton outline some of the ways asylum seekers "choose a country of asylum."[271] They argue that social networks—legal and illegal—link origin and destination countries. Not surprisingly, the report finds that "there is a consensus that social networks—particularly personal networks—are viewed by asylum seekers as the most trustworthy sources of information."[272] It also confirms that new geographic patterns, beginning in the 1990s, show that many immigrants "are arriving in countries where there are no pre-existing social networks. It can be expected that social networks will often evolve around these new arrivals."[273]

The report seeks is to find ways for the British government to disseminate appropriate information to new immigrants and asylum seekers, but it also seems to demonstrate how little such agencies can actually do to support many new immigrant populations. Since the Immigration Act of 2002, the inception of "reception centers," designed to accommodate newly arriving refugees in hotels renovated for that purpose—and move them away from London and the south-east of England, which has traditionally seen the largest influx of asylum seekers—the government has created institutions both to help these populations and to monitor and restrict them. The unspoken findings of this report, however, suggest that such populations cannot be controlled in such ways: distrust of governmental institutions among many refugee populations is cited as one important factor, but another is the simple observation that these populations, like those who have long-

standing histories and relationships to the surrounding geographies, trust their own experiences and friends and co-workers for information and support more than they trust governmental agencies.

Rather than citing this report to confirm insight about illegal immigrants to be found in *Dirty Pretty Things*, I would like to suggest that this report, although it is not phrased in these terms, is in fact suggesting that a feeling of belonging, a feeling supported by where one lives and works and makes friends, is the underlying important means by which "information" about new environments is transmitted; in fact, it probably constitutes the most important form of information transmitted. Indeed, as Bhikhu Parekh argues, "so far as political life is concerned, [political doctrines] need to be interpreted and defined in the light of the wider culture and the unique history and political circumstances of the community concerned."[274]

Parekh's claim stems from an investment in understanding the relationship between political thought, philosophical thought, and actual human experience; he argues that political doctrines cannot capture the compelling richness of human life, and thus its usefulness—and it is indeed useful—does not necessarily extend across a full spectrum. One of the important dimensions of human experience that cannot be fully captured by political doctrine, Parekh argues, is a sense of belonging. Writing about multiculturalism, Parekh argues:

> Commitment or belonging is reciprocal in nature. A citizen cannot be committed to her political community unless it is also committed to her, and she cannot belong to it unless it accepts her as one of it. The political

> community therefore cannot expect its members to develop a sense of belonging to it unless it in turn belongs to them. It must, therefore, value and cherish them all equally and reflect this in its structure, policies, conduct of public affairs, self-understanding and self-definition. This involves granting them equal rights of citizenship, a decent standard of living, and the opportunity to develop themselves and participate in and make their respective contributions to its collective life.[275]

Clearly, in the case of refugees and other asylum seekers, there are difficulties in establishing these reciprocal forms of commitment. Parekh strives to construct a view of British nationality which allows for a keen sense of belonging on the basis of civic and political duties and rights. In *Dirty Pretty Things*, however, because these duties have not been and cannot be carried out, the forms of exchange and belonging function quite differently.

The communities in the film center around three spatial networks: a morgue, a hotel, and a gypsy cab stand. Okwe is, in fact, the key social connecting-point for each of these sites, and the work he undertakes—one of the crucial ways in which he "belongs"—is largely undertaken in ways which defeat the official purposes of these sites. He sleeps and plays chess in the morgue, treats patients at the cab stand, performs surgery at the hotel. The friendships and hospitalities he encounters at each of these sites also hint at the unconventional ways belonging can be constructed when one is not fully acknowledged or accepted by formal or official networks. These illicit economies of exchange become sites for re-envisioning official affective and spatial relationships.

Okwe's ability and willingness to lend his skills to his community—to the workers at the cab stand, to Senay, to Guo Yi—parallels Senay's difficulties in establishing communal ties. She does not talk to many people, and begins to reach out to others only during the course of the film. After she leaves her job at the hotel out of fear of being caught working, she goes to work in a sweatshop—filmed in a real sweatshop in Dalton. Frears calls this place "not that bad"—I suppose in comparison to nightmarish conditions in "those other," unnamed countries. Here, she is sexually assaulted in return for not being turned in. Parallelling the claims about socially constructed knowledge made by Khoser and Pinkerton, the foreman coerces Senay into oral sex by frightening her. He tells her that she'll go to jail if he turns her in—a fact supported by the Immigration Officers' claims—then he adds that English jails are "mixed" and that she'll be thrown in with men and women alike and repeatedly raped. Unlike Okwe, who steals drugs from hospitals and otherwise uses his skills in unlicensed ways, Senay must turn to other methods: she trades oral sex for protection. The first time, she is coerced both by surprise and intimidation; the second time, she bites the sweatshop foreman's penis and runs out of the shop, stealing clothes along the way.

Okwe, who is more aware of the precariousness of his position than Senay, has different means of achieving his ends than Senay, who is trying to live within the bounds of the law, but keeps getting abused by those restrictions and must therefore perform increasingly invasive maneuvers which ultimately lead her trade her body in exchange for a safe place to live. Neither she nor Okwe ever perform such activities for money—the goal is not consumerist—which only emphasizes the extra-legal forms of exchange. Senay gives up her virginity—but not her decision to remain invisible: she tells Sneaky, "You will not see

me. You just do" as she agrees to let him penetrate her. This penetration is just a prelude to the proposed penetration which will garner her British passport: Senay has decided to sell her kidney. Sneaky, having learned that Okwe is a doctor through his own extralegal network of personnel at other hotels who offer information and even transportation across borders for services and other goods, uses the information to coerce him into performing the surgery—he has resorted to showing Okwe pictures of the people who might die with botched, inexpert and unsanitary operations conducted within the hotel.

Looking at Us: British Immigration History and Film

Frears's film, as Kevin Foster points out, can be seen as part of a movement in film to record a twentieth-century and contemporary England which can best be characterized by its immigrant and asylum-seeking populations. Following a history of increasingly rigid restrictions, the Immigration Act of 1981 established the current categories of British nationality; only those labeled "British citizens" had the automatic right of abode in the UK. This particular amendment to the Immigration Act was intended to curb the influx of West Indian, Indian and other Commonwealth citizens coming to England. Prior to 1981, two other amendments to immigration legislation had lasting effects on the UK population: in 1948, in response to a labor shortfall and a desire to consolidate imperial power, the British Nationality Act created a shared citizenry, the United Kingdom and Commonwealth, and gave all citizens the right to settle anywhere within its territories. Raphael Samuel cites the docking of the *Empire Windrush,* the "boat whose arrival in Britain in 1949 supposedly inaugurated the epoch of New Commonwealth immigration," as a seminal event. He argues

that is a material and retrospective figure of the "processes of projection, amplification, and displacement [which] seem incontestably more important than the original event."[276] This boat and arrival figures in British film, too. According to Foster, "British Government ministers were deeply discomfited by the unforeseen effects of the legislation."[277] They were unprepared for people coming in large numbers from the Caribbean, from African countries, from India. Samuel's mention of the *Empire Windrush*, although it comes at the end of an unfinished essay, is an important connection in terms of the British immigration history and in terms of how immigration has been historically portrayed in British films.

Successive legislative amendments to immigration policy have been equally informed by fears of "invasion," of the dominant culture and of racial demographics being subsumed by another, although which "others" have been labeled that way change over time.[278] After 2001, for instance, the nature of the restrictions shifted primary emphasis from cultural differences based on ethnicity to questions of "terrorism" and "safe borders," as the title of the white paper "Secure Borders, Safe Haven" suggests. This shift does not mean that racialized policies are not still active or actively pursued, just that the terms have been somewhat altered. After the events of 9/11 and the subsequent stricter surveillances at ports of entry of many countries, the legal emphasis in the UK has been on non-EU immigration populations. Indeed, "Secure Borders, Safe Haven" and the Immigration Acts of 2002 and 2006 have been founded on adopted EU human rights principles, designed both to assuage presumed public fears of immigrant populations and asylum seekers and to alleviate concerns that government bureaucracy created inhumane conditions for asylum seekers. Thus, it is fitting that in *Dirty Pretty Things*, the immigrants with the most economic power

are Sneaky and Ivan, both of whom seem to come from EU countries and have established legal residencies. Senay, a Turkish national, has a strong plea for asylum, but Okwe, coming from Nigeria illegally, has no chance.

Kevin Foster points out that British cinema has been representing immigration concerns from the early 1950s on: he argues that early movies about the wave of black immigrant populations sought to find a balance between "the black experience of prejudice and racism while at the same time offering the films' overwhelmingly white audiences a positive self-reflection, to balance realism against nationalist affirmation."[279] Ultimately, he finds that these films do establish an awkward balance between reflecting the national difficulties of a massive influx of post-war black, immigrants to the UK; he writes that the films "affirm that the family and the society it embodies and comprises can absorb and survive them."[280] In contemporary films, Foster says, although the racial and ethnic makeup of immigration populations have changed, representations still "provide a key measure of the further unraveling of the social consensus that sustained the nation through the darkest hours of the Second World War."[281] Citing *Dirty Pretty Things* as an example, he argues "that [England's] very existence as a meaningful community, imagined or actual, is in question."[282] Foster's view of *Dirty Pretty Things* is that, because there are no strong familial connections in the lives of the main characters, and because "trust begets betrayal, reliance invites abuse, vulnerability brings exploitation," the film becomes a "reminder of all that this community seems to have lost."[283] In the end, Foster finds a fractured, comfortless, transitory world in which "we too…are all exiles."[284]

While I find Foster's analysis of the relationship between British cinema and its responses to immigration policies insightful, I also think that he misjudges the force of *Dirty Pretty Things* and misaligns his view of familial constructions with nationhood. This is, as Sara Ahmed points out, a common misconception. The difficulty occurs, she writes, when "a crucial risk posed by migrant cultures is defined as their failure to become British, narrated as their failure to love the culture of the host nation. The failure here is the failure of migrants to 'return' the love of the nation through gratitude."[285] Foster's primary disappointment with Frears's film—and, I think, with some popular conceptions of British nationalism—is not that the immigrants portrayed in it aren't grateful; rather, he's disappointed that they haven't been offered love by a nation that would generate gratitude. He correctly places himself and the rest of the nation as participants in this failure, but he also misses the fact that Senay and Okwe do in fact find comfort, a sense of belonging, reward for vulnerability, hope, love, and community throughout the film. They just don't—and can't, as they function outside the boundaries of legally recognizable relationships—find it in institutionally recognized ways.

Belonging

In the previous chapter, I quoted Sara Ahmed's idea of comfort. She writes, "to be comfortable is to be so at ease with one's environment that it is hard to distinguish where one's body ends and the world begins."[286] Ahmed's purpose here is to discuss various forms of heteronormativity as a form of "public comfort,"[287] but the discussion also functions in terms of contemporary British race relations as they pertain to Frears's film. The film's treatment of specific, racialized relationships to the larger urban London environment rests

upon the comfort of the characters. For instance, Senay's growing comfort with Okwe is an important feature of their relationship: both of them are invested in her comfort in various ways. Okwe wants to respect Senay's desire for keeping up appearances by complying with the intricate exchange of the single key to her apartment. This dance—which takes the form of tying a shoe in the Baltic Hotel so that Okwe can pass by and examining fruit in the market so that they can exchange the sole key to the apartment—is necessary for Senay to feels protected, at home. Okwe and Senay's relationship is characterized by Okwe's attention to her comfort.

Other characters' comforts are attended to in concomitant ways. The bellhop's comforts are primarily consumerist in nature: making money, a monthly date with a prostitute, listening to music. In each of these relationships, comforts are circumscribed by the characters' extra-legal relationship to London. These extra-legal relationships construct a different vision of the urban landscape than we've seen in previous chapters, even Chapter Three, which deals primarily with homosexual illegal activity, but in which each of the characters has a legal claim to nationhood almost wholly missing from this film. An important exception is the British Juliette who, as a sex worker, parallels the sale of body parts in exchange for money or other forms of capital which will enable those who undergo the illegal surgery to participate more fully in the sanctioned societal exchanges of the city.

I don't mean to sound sentimental about these relationships, but I do want to do them justice. It seems to me that the strength of the film rests in the solid construction of relationships, which are predicated upon a sense of belonging to one another, not by virtue of citizenship but by being forced away from citizenship. Senay, for instance, cannot live

with anyone under the terms of her asylum agreement, but she also worries about appearances: as a single Muslim woman (and a virgin), she is afraid the cleaning women will talk and that her reputation and hence her virtue will be ruined. She lets Okwe sleep on the couch of her tiny apartment, however, because of her increasing trust of him. Later, she allows him his own key to the place and then finds herself in the apartment at the same time as him—something she'd been avoiding.

That scene is charming: Okwe comes back from the market and begins preparing a meal. He can cook, but there is not enough hot water for him to wash the dishes and for Senay to bathe—Okwe says, "Dirty glasses need very hot water, Senay" and Senay rejoins, 'So do women, Okwe." Appeased, however, she sits down to eat the meal, first asking if, in his country, it is men who do the cooking. Okwe teases her back after Senay compliments his cooking. He explains that, when they make the dish in his country, they use pork. When Senay gets a horrified look on her face, he smiles, and then adds, "Of course, here I used lamb."

This scene looks like an ordinary one of two people sitting down to a meal. Often, such scenes in movies or other texts serve to further a romantic plot, to show a family at peace or in conflict. Here, however, while some of those same connotations are in place—there is a sense of a first date about the two characters—the overarching emphasis is simply on two people communicating and sharing a meal. They are becoming comfortable with one another and with their surroundings, despite the fact that their lives are circumvented by low-paying jobs in a largely unfamiliar city and by squalid living conditions—the lack of hot

water is just one more inconvenience as they clamber over a decrepit, destroyed sideyard to get to the apartment.

Writing about history, and the important part popular memory plays in it, Raphael Samuel points out an unstated assumption that knowledge "filters downward."[288] In *Dirty Pretty Things* there is strange sense of seeing the bottom side of official London's cultural legacies, but the film works with and against that hierarchy; it's not simply a case of masking the hierarchy in order to make the "bottom" somehow more visible; it's about acknowledging the usefulness of invisibility. A consumerist-production critique undergirds the film, but the two illicit avenues of exchange and belonging are interesting in their own right. The film creates a world that presumes certain kinds of spatial/cultural geographies, which are predicated as much on affinities as on economics or race. These geographic parts of London are actively participating in so-called third-world conditions—the black market for organs; sweat shops; squalid living situations; gypsy cab stands run by Pakistani men; the outdoor shopping bazaar—and thus function as an odd kind of anachronistic space. In my introduction, I cited Anne McClintock's description of anachronistic space; she argues

> [a]ccording to the colonial version of this trope, imperial progress across the space of empire is figured as a journey backward in time to an anachronistic moment of prehistory. By extension, the return journey to Europe is seen as rehearsing the evolutionary logic of historical progress forward and upward to the apogee of the Enlightenment in the European metropolis. [289]

In her excellent study, the "center"—London—has distinct commercial influences that reflect its imperial status. The exchange of goods and services in such sites, as I have

mentioned throughout this chapter without full examination, mimics ordinary patterns of official trade routes: Sneaky brings truffles to the fancy unnamed hotel, for instance, but he is interested in information rather than financial remuneration; the hotelier there, in turn, traffics in the exchange of people across borders, which seems almost a natural extension of the economic exchanges of hospitality workers more generally. Okwe buys herbs at the market, but the herbs are drugs; he's a drug user and a drug dealer, and although most of these drugs are not themselves illegal, his forms of exchange are. Similarly, Senay and some of the other immigrants in the film exchange body parts for various freedoms; this is an ordinary economic exchange among sex workers, but this unlicensed surgical trade takes place inside a hotel. All of these economic exchanges circumvent both the usual channels and the usual forms of sanctioned exchange in London (and indeed across international borders), and thus work to construct a counter-story which runs parallel to, but also therefore necessarily covers different ground than, the forms of London's international trade and finance I noted, especially in Chapter One. International "trade" is small scale: bodies come across borders; the bazaar in Dalston functions within the city but also alongside its standard commercial routes; the diner, strewn with painted camels and Arabic menus, is where Okwe receives his drugs and a pair of shoes after jumping out a window barefoot to escape the immigration officials. I tend to read these sites somewhat more generously than as a simple reverse process of anachronistic space, as something more than the spaces of the colonized "other" coming to roost in London. Rather, it is the London outside them—the commercial, tourist, "known" London—which seems inaccessible to these people living there. Even the ways the economic exchanges function in such places suggest a counter to

the conception of London as a double geography with a distinct bifurcation. Okwe is so indignant when he asks the kidney transplant patients, "What country did you do this in?" and then, when he goes to treat the man whose surgery has been so badly done, he struggles both to do the right thing and to cope with his own disgust that this can happen in London. Thus, when Senay asks where he has been and he replies "Africa," this phrase becomes a stand-in for all that is wrong with post-colonial globalization. The lack of specificity here is certainly something that can be regarded as participating in some of the most maudlin (liberal) sentiments about racism and imperialism, but it also exemplifies the frustrations particular communities feel when confronted with such inequities. The very careful specificities of the film—its particular characters, its particular placements—work to support an equally particularized—if fictitious—community, and thus the overwhelming sensation is simply one of complicity.

I argued in my introduction that narratives of space are important because they are how we can tell the effect of affect. All of the affective responses to London, to the violence of war, and to the contemporary and historical difficulties of race and ethnicity in a post-imperial city seem to be connected to feelings of vulnerability. Ambivalence is an eloquent admission of that feeling, as it juggles two or more equally compelling stances without attempting to reconcile them. Intimacy, too, requires vulnerability, a decision to accept boundary-crossing, just as autonomy can require accepting vulnerability as a consequence of crossing a boundary. The reward of vulnerability may very well be a sense of belonging, a sense of comfort, but as with all affective responses, it is fleeting.

I also mentioned in my introduction that I take great pleasure in narratives that speak back to a rich range of experiences; the materials I've chosen also bespeak a range of emotional maturities and considerable abilities to register and accommodate those experiences. When I was deciding on my materials, I deliberately chose to write about popularly accessible materials because I thought they would provide both easier access to broadly applicable affective responses and because I wanted to make it clear that such emotions were somehow "insider" emotions, not simply arising from experiencing an unfamiliar landscape and array of affects.

The narratives I examine in this project demonstrate that London *is* vulnerable, and that its vulnerability is registered by bodies and by institutions in different but entwined ways that reflect its post-imperial status. While vulnerability is an obvious component of many literary texts, it is less obviously part of an understanding of space and thus should have a place in public discourses of many kinds. It is my hope that this project will bring an awareness of the spatial and affective component of narrative to readers and writers of such narratives, in all spheres of activity.

Conclusion

At the end of the last chapter, I wrote that the emotional terrain I examine in this dissertation comes from political materials and popular literature and film because I wanted to use material that presented an "insider's" perspective of London. Much interesting work has been done to destabilize London as the center of imperial England; my goal is to extend such work by demonstrating the ways the structure of the city creates destabilizing affective sensations and experiences within it. Using texts which take their understanding of London to be ordinary and accessible is important because such texts demonstrate a continuity of feeling that points directly to the landscape as a structuring affective influence. If narratives about people who are most likely to feel at home in the city are registering vulnerability, it seemed safe to assume that it is indeed a constitutive feature of the city.

The affective registers I discuss throughout this project are described in largely positive terms because I see them as reactions to political problems which help to transform them from abstract, ineffective policies to concrete, specific agendas for London and England. Ambivalence, for instance, is a powerful critique of the problem of history when history is brought to bear on constructions of national identity. The politics of defining national identities rests on describing them in terms of what they are not, in terms of boundaries and ethnic and cultural practices which serve to bolster a national community. Ambivalence, as I described in Chapter One, calls those terms into question by questioning the unity and presumed British nationality of London citizens and thus becomes a potential incitement for at least rethinking policy if not actively changing it. The negative side of

ambivalence, which I only touch upon in my use of the term "irresolution," is that it may not be useful, productive sensation over a prolonged time; it runs the risk of becoming inaction. Bowen does justice to the insularity of some forms of intimacy, but in Chapter Two I also envision a powerful argument for restraint in intimate relations. In Chapter Four, ambivalence about restraint in intimate relations suggests that the structure of the city has changed enough to allow for new possibilities and configurations of affective responses. One way to extend the terms of the project would be to look more closely at the positive and negative valences of each of the affective sensations I discuss.

Vulnerability itself strikes me as neither a positive or negative sensation. Reactions to vulnerability, however, can be. I mentioned in my introduction that vulnerability can engender either an opening up—an acceptance of bodies and places as inherently open to wounding—or a closing off—a defensive posture against wounding. In bodies, some defensive reactions are not wholly voluntary (a flinch, for instance, could be seen as an involuntary response), and the structure and use of cities is such that no plan for the city can be definitive, either. Defensiveness can be positive as well, but I also believe that understanding London as a vulnerable city means accepting what cannot be controlled.

The link I establish between affect and history is crucial, and needs further development. The historical shift from the Great War to the "global war on terror" means, I suspect, that the sensation of vulnerability becomes more diffuse: after the Great War, people seemed to know what to fear (bombs, damaged bodies, invading nations). Now, fears are somehow simultaneously more diffuse and more narrowly focused. The subway bombings I mentioned in my introduction and the subsequent failed car bombings in June

2007 are guerilla tactics, designed to be unpredictable. The war on terror pinpoints Muslim populations specifically (even as distinctions between "safe" Muslims and "dangerous" ones are attempted), making London Muslims, for instance, more vulnerable to hate crimes. In particular, recent discussions about Londoners and other English Muslim women wearing the niqab attest to the central role of vulnerability. Many British Muslim women are taking up the niqab as a show of solidarity and as a visible marker of their faith. Some see it as "fard," Islamic law, while others see it as means to demonstrate social and political alliances. In popular British imagination, however, the garb creates distrust and even distaste. Jack Straw's widely publicized comments that the niqab impeded his ability to communicate with Muslim women was taken up as a rallying cry by many non-Muslim British people; they claimed that donning the niqab is at best a starkly separatist act, and at worst an active symbol of women's oppression. Vulnerability plays into these conversations strangely: some Muslim women report feeling more at ease, more confident in the niqab. They feel more vulnerable when they are more visible. Conversely, British cultural conventions distrust "masked" people; thus their sense of vulnerability to the unknown is heightened. And since the niqab is readily identifiable as specifically Muslim garb, it conjures associations with famous Muslim-instigated terror attacks: September 11th, the subway bombings in 2005, the recent failed car bombs in Piccadilly in July 2007. The war on terror seems to be producing complex reactions to vulnerability that my project does not fully investigate.

The most important way to extend the work I've begun here is to refine the methodology further. The chapters sometimes imagine the literary texts as examples of affective archives which construct alternate histories—this is most evident in Chapter

Three—and sometimes as objects of study out of which I construct an affective history. Rather than pushing for consistency, however, I am inclined to focus my attention on why some texts invite one approach and others a different one. I suspect that how consciously the historical materials are employed in each text makes a difference to how I've used them to make my case, and that more closely examining how history is put to use in each of the cultural texts would be a profitable approach to extending the project. In my introduction, I explained this difference as one which stems from the materials themselves: the fictional materials in Chapters Two and Four eschew historical evidence in order to construct their counter-narratives, while the novels in Chapters Two and Three use historical materials found or embedded in the landscape. I would like to continue this line of inquiry and see if the civic and architectural structures of London invoked in each of the narratives—the Houses of Parliament in Chapter One, for instance, or the streets of Dalton in Chapter Four—can be more explicitly tied to the affective dispositions I describe throughout the project.

When I began my dissertation, its idiosyncratic nature—writing about feelings and space in literature—invited me to think carefully about its stakes and its audience. One of the threads running throughout the chapters is London's changeable relationship to its imperial past, and the next step, one which will refine the stakes of the argument, is to emphasize how the material past gets embedded in each of the narratives I discuss. For instance, in the intervening years between World War II and Thatcher's election, London's increased immigrant population was a direct result of de-colonization. The backlash and legislation against those populations are important for understanding London's

contemporary civic structure and difficulties with other immigrant populations and for understanding London as a post-imperial city.

One of the difficulties in writing this dissertation has been identifying the sensations I read in each of the chapters. More specifically, I've sometimes had trouble naming the affective responses. Our understanding of the human range of emotions may be quite sophisticated, but for native English speakers, our language describing our emotional range is woefully insufficient. In fact, I imagine that the pleasure and purpose of fictional texts, regardless of genre, rests in their ability to convey experiences and sensations that are not accommodated because of the paucity of our affective descriptors. My interest in affective histories certainly has a social and political efficacy, but just as important is a need to understand and express our sensations and impressions of the world. Vulnerability has been a useful term within this project, as have ambivalence, intimacy, autonomy, and belonging, because these are all affective responses that have both internally felt and externally experienced components. Vulnerability is more than simply a response to external stimuli, as I suggested in my introduction when I argued that it arises not because of events, but because of a spatial and historic orientation to a series of events and experiences. I hope that this project provides a complex and nuanced sense of London's post-imperial vulnerability.

Notes

[1] CCTV cameras are permanently affixed close-captioned surveillance devices that hang over the streets of London and other metropolitan areas worldwide.
[2] Esther Addley, "Silence and Defiance as London Marks its Day of Horror," *The Guardian*. 8 July 2006. http://www.guardian.co.uk/attackonlondon/story/0,,1815796,00.html Accessed 26 April 2007.
[3] Leon Hempel and Eric Töpfer, *CCTV in Europe*, 25. www.urbaneye.net Accessed 5 May 2007.
[4] Jane Jacobs argues that because these bombs hit international banks rather than the Bank of England, they carried significant anticolonialist symbolic weight by damaging not just London but other global cities as well. See *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City*, London & NY: Routledge Press, 1996, 64-66.
[5] Quoted in Niran Abbas' essay, "CCTV: City Watch," in Joe Kerr and Andrew Gibson's *London from Punk to Blair*, London, UK: Reaktion Press, 2003,131.
[6] See for instance "More CCTV to Catch Future Bombers" http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/4679883.stm and "CCTV Camera Network to Cut Crime" http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/northamptonshire/4633431.stm. Accessed 23 May 2007.
[7] Blair's most recent comments reflect a potentially different point about London's vulnerability: in a broadcast on May 27th, 2007, he explicitly stated that civil liberties cannot be preserved at the expense of the safety of the nation. http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article1848485.ece. Accessed 27 May 2007.
[8] In addition to its history of fire—it was probably decimated by fire more than once between 54 BC and 200 AD, and again in the Great Fire of 1666, which destroyed four-fifths of the city—London has a similarly long history of epidemics. Between 1348-49, the Black Death destroyed London's population, thought to be around 30,000; it took nearly 200 years for it to recover. An influenza epidemic hit the population in 1558-59. Bubonic plague was also a frequent visitor, with epidemics in 1563, 1603, 1625, and most famously in 1665, when roughly 80,000 died. Approximately 700 hundred Londoners died in the zeppelin attacks of World War One; 11,000 are thought to have been killed by November of the London blitz of 1940-41.
[9] James Ball, "After the Bombs," *The Guardian*. July 4, 2006. http://www.guardian.co.uk/attackonlondon/story/0,,1812299,00.html Accessed 2 May 2007.
[10] Ibid.
[11] P. W. Preston. *Relocating England: Englishness in the New Europe*. Manchester, NY: Manchester University Press, 2004, 108.
[12] *Edge of Empire*, 41.
[13] A few weeks after the bombings, for instance, concrete barricades went up. *The Guardian* reported Londoners picnicking upon them, in part to connect responses in 2005 to the "unflagging spirit" of Londoners during the Blitz.
[14] Benjamin's *Arcades Project* is an important reference; for trauma theory, see Cathy Caruth's seminal *Unclaimed Experience.*
[15]Two excellent sources have served as the basis for this section, Francis Sheppard's *London: A History* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998. and Peter Ackroyd's *London: The Biography*. London:, UK: Chatto & Windus Press, 2000.
[16] *London: A History*, 52.
[17] *London: A History*, 34.
[18] *London: A History*, 95.
[19] Ibid., 105.
[20] Both Ackroyd and Sheppard point out that although London's long history as a center of international trade begins with the Romans, it is not a continuous history.
[21] *London: A History*, 125.
[22] The Reformation changed the religious demography of London; the Great Fire changed its religious architecture. By 1700, London was increasingly secular; financial concerns tended to influence political loyalties as much as religious considerations; and an influx of immigrants—Irish and Scottish, mostly, followed by the French and then other Western European populations—also contributed.

[23] Neils Lunds' famous 1904 painting of the same name shows an aerial view of St. Paul's cathedral and Bank Junction, connecting architectural monuments to commercial, financial, and moral might.
[24] *London: The Biography*, 512.
[25] See *London*: *The Biography* Chapter 56 for an in-depth discussion. Charles Booth and Henry Mayhew have also famously documented London's poor.
[26] Ibid., 330.
[27] *London: A History*, 332.
[28] Raphael Samuel takes up this phenomenon in *Theatres of Memory*; other critics such as Roger Louis and David Cannadine have also made insightful observations about the role of Empire in contemporary London.
[29] Gaston Bachelard, *Poetics of Space*. (trans Maria Jolas). Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1994, 211.
[30] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*. (trans. Colin Smith). NY, NY: Humanities Press, 1962, 253.
[31] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1977, 8.
[32] See *Space and Place,* Chapter 4.
[33] Ibid., 102.
[34] Sara Ahmed. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. NY, NY: Routledge Press, 2004, 46.
[35] For a lucid discussion of time and space in narrative theory, see Richard Terdiman's book, *Body and Stor.y* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005. Terdiman examines the history and conflict between theories of narrative and materiality.
[36] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London, UK: Verso Press, 1989, 23.
[37] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, NY, NY: Routledge Press, 1995, 40.
[38] Because modernism and postmodernism have different valences of meaning in literary studies and architecture, I have tried to avoid them except in places where they share enough characteristics to read meaningfully across disciplines. I also believe that paying attention to space and affect in narrative has implications for thinking about literary genres, as my use of the terms "official" and "unofficial" texts suggests.
[39] Pamela Gilbert, ed. *Imagined London.,* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002, 15.
[40] Raphael Samuel. *Theatres of Memor.,* NY, NY: Verso Press, 1994, 4.
[41] Both de Certeau and Lefebvre furthermore contend that experiences of the city are the primary means of its cultural and social production.
[42] Mike Davis, *City of Quartz*. NY, NY: Verso Press, 1990, 375.
[43] *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. 12.
[44] As Said and others have pointed out, imperialism is a geographic form of power and domination.
[45] *Edge of Empire*, 40-41.
[46] *Edge of Empire,* 16.
[47] Ibid., 24.
[48] Virginia Woolf. *Mrs. Dalloway*. NY, NY: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1925, 4. Hereafter *MD*.
[49] Interestingly, there are replicas of Big Ben in Trinidad, Zimbabwe, and Canada, among other places.
[50] This is as true now as then. The narratives and paintings of the burning of Parliament in 1884 as well as the celebration of Guy Fawkes failed bomb attempts attest to the ways the building itself looms in the collective imagination. The debating process in English Parliament is also famously lively and engaging, and is regularly featured on news channels and in films and literature. Virginia Woolf wrote regularly about matters of Parliament in her diary, and her family connections kept her well-informed. (her grandfather, James Stephen reported on parliamentary affairs; Leonard Woolf was an active member of both the Labor Party and the Fabian Society).
[51] Pamela L. Caughie. "Purpose and Play in Woolf's London Scene Essays," *Women's Studies*. Volume 16, 1989, 402.
[52] Sonita Sarker. "Locating a Native Englishness in Virginia Woolf's *The London Scene*," *NWSA Journal*. 13(2) Summer, 2001, 6.
[53] Virginia Woolf. *The London Scene*: *Six Essays on London Life*. NY, NY: HarperCollins Books, 1975, 7. Hereafter *LS*.

[54] Ibid, 14-15.
[55] Peter Ackroyd. *London: The Biography*. London, UK: Chatto and Windus, 2000, 724. World War II London narratives are, as I mention in my introduction, taken up in Chapter Two.
[56] *LS*, 19.
[57] Bond Street doesn't really exist in the landscape anymore, although a portion of it has been preserved in Old Bond Street.
[58] *LS*, 21.
[59] Ibid., 27.
[60] Ibid., 55.
[61] Ibid., 56.
[62] Ibid., 57-58.
[63] Ibid., 59.
[64] *MD*, 172.
[65] A Parliamentary Act in 1963 required that the Prime Minister be approved by the House of Commons, thus effectively insuring that all future Prime Ministers also are MPs.
[66] *LS*, 61.
[67] Ibid., 63.
[68] Ibid., 64-65.
[69] Francis Sheppard. *London: A History*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998, 328-30.
[70] Zeppelin attacks on the city during the Great War killed around 700 people. The attacks made people more aware of London's vulnerability to attack from Europe, a threat evident in the Parliamentary debates discussed below.
[71] *MD*, 5.
[72] Ibid., 4.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid., 9.
[75] Susan Merrill Squier. *Virginia Woolf and London*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984, 93.
[76] The war was visible in terms of damaged soldiers bodies and in the rebuilding of the docks after the Zeppelin attacks.
[77] Ibid., 184.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid., 149.
[81] Ibid., 186.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Op. cit. 18.
[84] In Woolf as in the debates, race and ethnicity are named through what Sarker calls "indirection;" the race of the self is named through the race of the Other. There is an interesting variant on this form of racism in Chapter 3.
[85] As I argue about the index to Thatcher's memoirs in Chapter Three, and like any archive, such headings are instructive because of what is deemed important and what remains invisible.
[86] Great Britain. *The Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) The Official Report*. London, UK: HMSO Series 5, Vol 56, 902. This is the primary subject of the debates on March 19th, 1924. Hereafter *The Parliamentary Debates*.
[87] Anne Oliver Bell, ed. *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*. Vol. 2, NY, NY: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1978, 309.
[88] "Locating a Native Englishness in Virginia Woolf's *The London Scene*," 9-10.
[89] *MD*, 12.
[90] Ibid.
[91] "Locating a Native Englishness in Virginia Woolf's *The London Scene*," 20.
[92] *MD*, 48-49.
[93] *MD*, 58.

[94] Ibid., 59.
[95] Op. cit., 15.
[96] The statue of Gordon, a British Empire administrator and soldier, is now located on the Victoria Embankment. Gordon is best remembered for the Battle of Khartoum and his role in the Opium Wars.
[97] Alfred Gillgrass. *The Book of Big Ben*. London, UK: Herbert Joseph Ltd, 1946, 42.
[98] Kate Flint "Sounds of the City: Virginia Woolf and Modern Noise," in Helen Small, and Trudi Tate, eds. *Literature, Science, Psychoanalysis, 1830-1970*. London: Oxford University Press, 2003, 190. Flint makes this observation not about Big Ben in particular, but about technological noises in Woolf more generally.
[99] *MD*, 4. This notion of influenza "affecting" how Clarissa feels is an important parallel to Septimus' mental difficulties, another means of affectively connecting them through embodied/spatial experiences.
[100] Ibid.
[101] St. Margaret's is the British Parliament church, located in Parliament Square. It is physically and aurally overshadowed by the chimes and tower of Big Ben.
[102] *MD*, 48-49.
[103] Lynn Hollen Lees "London Urban Networks," in Martin Daunton, ed. *The Cambridge Urban History*. 81.
[104] Ibid., 91.
[105] *The Parliamentary Debates*, HMSO Series 5, Vol. 48, 424.
[106] *The Parliamentary Debates*, HMSO Series 5, Vol. 54, 433.
[107] *MD*, 13.
[108] Ibid, 16.
[109] Op. Cit. 403.
[110] *MD,* 19-20.
[111] Ibid., 18.
[112] *MD*, 115-16.
[113] *The Parliamentary Debates*, HMSO Series 5, Vol. 48, 421.
[114] *MD*, 21.
[115] In addition to the car mentioned earlier and the plane mentioned here, there are the sounds of an ambulance and several references to explosions.
[116] *The Parliamentary Debates*, HMSO Series 5, Vol. 56, pp. 13-20.
[117] Ibid., 478-82.
[118] Elizabeth Bowen. "English Literature at Mid-Century," August 21 1953. Elizabeth Bowen Collection. University of Texas, Austin.
[119] Keith Jeffrey, "The Second World War," in Judith Brown and Wm. Roger Lewis, ed. *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, Vol. IV: The Twentieth Century. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999, 306-328, 306-307.
[120] D.J. Wendon, "Churchill Radio and Cinema" in Robert Blake and Wm. Roger Lewis, eds. *Churchill.* NY, NY: WW Norton & Company, 1993, 215-239, 220.
[121] Ibid., 221.
[122] Francis Sheppard, *London: A History*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998, 334.
[123] James McBath and Walter Fisher, eds. *British Public Addresses 1828-1960*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971, 494.
[124] The slogan is just one of several in the "Careless Talk Costs Lives" poster campaign. This particular slogan was in use by May, 1942.
[125] Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*. London, UK: Jonathan Cape, 1991, 16.
[126] *The Myth of the Blitz*, 14-15.
[127] Ibid., 18.
[128] Peter Ackroyd. *London: The Biography*. Chatto and Windus, 2000, 723.
[129] This colloquial phrase is adopted by Lauren Berlant in her edited collection of essays, *Intimacy*. She argues that having "a life" requires intimate exchanges to cross public and private boundaries. I explain her argument more fully in the rest of the chapter.
[130] Elizabeth Bowen, "English Literature at Mid-Century," August 21, 1953. Elizabeth Bowen Collection. University of Texas, Austin.

[131] Elizabeth Bowen. *The Heat of the Day*. NY, NY: Anchor Books, 1948, 57. Hereafter *HD*.
[132] *HD*, 3.
[133] Ibid.,4.
[134] Ibid.,5.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Lauren Berlant, *Intimacy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press 2000, 1.
[137] Yi-Fu Tuan. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1977, 128.
[138] *HD*, 5.
[139] Op. Cit.
[140] Ibid., 4.
[141] Robert Fortner. *Radio, Morality and Culture: Britain, Canada and the United States. 1919-1945*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005, 29.
[142] ASG Butler. *Recording Ruin*. London, UK: Constable and Company, 1942, 10.
[143] Ibid., 18.
[144] Elizabeth Bowen "English Literature at Mid-Century," August 21, 1953. Elizabeth Bowen Collection. University of Texas, Austin.
[145] *HD*, 99.
[146] Robert Rhodes James, ed. *Churchill Speaks: Winston S. Churchill in Peace and War Collected Speeches 1897-1963*. NY, NY: Chelsea House Publishers, 1980, 586.
[147] Ibid., 589.
[148] *Space and Place*, 86.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Maureen Waller, *London 1945: Life in the Debris of War*. London, UK: John Murray Publishers, 2004, 138.
[151] *Space and Place*, 149.
[152] Ibid.
[153] *HD*, 22.
[154] Ibid., 39.
[155] Ibid., 34.
[156] Ibid., 321.
[157] Ibid., 363.
[158] Allan Hepburn. *Intrigue: Espionage and Culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005, 148.
[159] Ibid., 139.
[160] Ibid, 139.
[161] Fredric Jameson. *The Geopolitical Aesthetic: Cinema and Space in the World System*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995, 36.
[162] This in quotation marks because the Nazi Party itself is seldom mentioned in Churchill's radio rhetoric; rather, he focuses on a familiar rhetorical process of dividing the good us from the bad them in ways which render the actual people at war only relevant for the Allies.
[163] Sir Winston Churchill. "Be Ye Men of Valour," BBC Radio Broadcast, May 13th 1940. http:// www.churchill-society-london-org.uk/BeYeMofV.ntml. Available 1/15/07.
[164] John Lukacs, *Five Days in London*, May 1940, 25-27.
[165] *HD*, 167.
[166] Ibid.
[167] "Be Ye Men of Valour."
[168] Ibid, "The War of the Unknown Warriors," BBC radio broadcast, July 14, 1940. http:// www.churchill-society-london-org.uk/UnknWarr.html. Available 1/15/07.
[169] Ibid.
[170] *The Geopolitical Aesthetic*, 37.
[171] Laura Kipnis. "Adultery" In Lauren Berlant, ed. *Intimacy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000, 9-47, 11.
[172] *The Myth of the Blitz*, 257.

[173] Juliet Gardiner. *Wartime Britain, 1929-1945*. London, UK: Headline Book Publishing, 2004, 145-46.
[174] Ibid., 154.
[175] Lord Woolton. BBC broadcast. http://www.bbc.co.uk/heritage/story/ww2/homefront2.shtml. Accessed 6/6/2006.
[176] Sian Nicholas. *The Echo of War: Homefront Propaganda and the Wartime BBC, 1935-45.* Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1996, 73.
[177] *HD*, 121-22.
[178] Preface to Angus Calder's *The People's War, Britain 1939-45*. NY, NY: Pantheon Press, 1969, 7.
[179] *The Myth of the Blitz*, xiv.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Robert was wounded at Dunkirk and, at the start of the Blitz in September, had just been discharged from the hospital and gone to work in the War Office. Stella and Robert met a few weeks later.
[182] One of the reasons I've chosen to work with this particular Bowen novel, rather than *The Demon Lover*, is because of this ambiguity.
[183] Elizabeth Bowen. "Crisis," Transcript of a BBC broadcast. Febuary 2 1947. Elizabeth Bowen Collection. The University of Texas at Austin.
[184] Bowen, Elizabeth. *Notes on Eire Espionage Reports to Winston Churchill 1940-2*. Country Cork, Ireland: Aubane Historical Society, 1999, 13.
[185] Elizabeth Bowen. Transcript of a broadcast interview with Elizabeth Bowen by John Bowen, William Craig, W. N. Ewer. September 11, 1959. Elizabeth Bowen Collection. The University of Texas at Austin.
[186] Robert Casario, "The Heat of the Day: Modernism and Narrative in Paul de Man and Elizabeth Bowen," *Modern Language Quarterly: A Journal of Literary History.* 54.2 (1993) 263-84, 266.
[187] Because the novel deliberately takes place after Thatcher becomes Prime Minister but just before AIDs becomes a global concern explicitly and negatively linked to homosexuality, Will believes himself to indeed have privileges which are accorded to him as much because of when he is gay as that he is gay.
[188] Even the National Front, the notorious and racist organization so prominent in London in the 1980s, is only mentioned once in reference to a candidate standing for election. Despite Thatcher's claim that the GLC is linked to radical political agendas, she does not name the agendas or the groups in this book. The index—itself a form of narrative mapping—is remarkable for what is not included.
[189] See Richard Dellamora. *Apocalyptic Overtures*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1994. In chapter 8, Dellamora connects the concerns of the novel to the multiple pasts—including the impact of Thatcherite policies—of and about gay experiences.
[190] Margaret Thatcher. *The Downing Street Years*. NY, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993, 590. Hereafter *DSY*.
[191] Raphael Samuel. *Theatres of Memory*. London, UK: Verso Press, 1994, 163.
[192] Ibid., 161.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Section 28, discussed at some length later in the chapter, prohibits "promoting" homosexuality through publishing or teaching. Mention of it is absent from her book, despite the dissonance this bill created between local and national London governing bodies; her discussion of education reform more generally is also markedly devoid of any local political context.
[195] *DSY*, 595.
[196] Ibid., 590.
[197] Ibid., 595.
[198] Ibid.
[199] *Theatres of Memory*, 259.
[200] Ibid., 270.
[201] Ibid., 271.
[202] *DSY*, 21.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid., 22.
[205] Ibid., 24.

[206] Indeed, the genre of her text—a political memoir—suggests that she is interested in creating a sense of herself as both a private and public model for the nation.
[207] Alan Hollinghurst. *The Swimming-Pool Library*, NY, NY: Vintage Press, 1988, 163. Hereafter, *SPL.*
[208] Ibid., 165.
[209] Ibid., 164.
[210] Ibid., 310.
[211] *Apocalyptic Overtures*, 93.
[212] Ibid., 190.
[213] *SPL*, 82.
[214] Ibid., 88.
[215] Ibid., 111.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Ibid., 114.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Robert Aldrich. *Colonialism and Homosexuality*, London, UK: Routledge Press, 2003,5.
[220] Ibid., 10-11.
[221] *DSY*, 7.
[222] Joe Kerr and Andrew Gibson, eds. *London from Punk to Blair*. London, UK: Reaktion Books, Ltd., 2003, 12.
[223] In Martin Daunton's epilogue to *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*. Volume 3. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 834.
[224] John Davis. "From GLC to GLA: London Politics from Then to Now" in *London from Punk to Blair*. 112.
[225] *London from Punk to Blair*, 13.
[226] *DSY*, 12. Snoek is a cheap fish, similar to mackerel, which can be salted and smoked.
[227] After the Greater London Authority was created in place of the GLC, he also became—and currently is—Mayor of London.
[228] *London from Punk to Blair*, 88.
[229] I use the term "resident" to refer to anyone living in London; citizenship is hard to verify, and the inhabitants of London naturally occupy many different legal and extra-legal relationships to the city, as I show in the next chapter.
[230] *DSY*, 143.
[231] Ibid., 145.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid., 147.
[234] Anna Marie Smith. *New Right Discourse on Race and Sexuality*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994, 35.
[235] Sara Ahmed. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. NY, NY: Routledge Press, 2004, 144-45.
[236] *SPL*, 198.
[237] Ibid., 200.
[238] Ibid., 4.
[239] Ibid.
[240] *SPL*, 8.
[241] *Apocalyptic Overtures*. Op cit.
[242] Quoted in *New Right Discourse on Race and Sexuality*, 183.
[243] *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 146.
[244] Richard Canning. *Gay Fiction Speaks: Conversations with Gay Novelists*. New York: Columbia UP, 2000, 53.
[245] *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 148.
[246] Ibid.
[247] *SPL*, 8.
[248] Ibid.

[249] Mark W Turner. *Backward Glances: Cruising the Queer Streets of New York and London*. London, UK: Reaktion Press, 2003, 10.
[250] Ibid., 43.
[251] *SPL*, 9.
[252] Ibid., 109.
[253] Ibid., 108-09.
[254] Ibid., 109.
[255] Ibid., 197.
[256] Ibid., 198-99.
[257] Canary Wharf was subject to an attempted IRA bombing in the 1990s, when it was viewed largely as failed Thatcherite project. Now, Canary Wharf rivals The City as London's financial center.
[258] *SPL*, 200.
[259] Ibid., 201.
[260] Ibid., 203.
[261] Ibid., 206.
[262] UK immigration law stipulates that refugees may not legally work in the country for 6 months while their application is under review.
[263] Sara Ahmed. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. NY, NY: Routledge Press, 2004, 134.
[264] Sara Ahmed, Claudia Castañeda, Milla Shellar, eds. *Uprootings/Regroupings*. Oxford, UK: Berg, 2003, 9.
[265] "Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain" UK Parliamentary White Paper, 2001, 4. http://www.archive2.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm53/5387/cm5387.pdf Accessed 1/8/2006.
[266] Other types of familial relationships are no longer usually grounds for legal immigration.
[267] "Secure Borders, Safe Haven," 23.
[268] Rosemary Sales. "The Deserving and the Undeserving? Refugees, Asylum seekers and Welfare in Britain," *Critical Social Policy*. 2002; 22; 456. http://csp.sagepub.com.
[269] *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 147.
[270] Stephen Applebaum. *Stephen Frears Dirty Pretty Things*. http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/films/2002/11/27/stephen_frears_dirty_pretty_things_interview.shtml. Accessed 1/8/2006.
[271] Khoser, Khalid, and Pinkerton, Charles. "The Social Networks of Asylum Seekers and the Dissemination of Information About Countries of Asylum," British Home Office 2002, 1, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/socialnetwork.pdf.
[272] Ibid, 20.
[273] Ibid, 24.
[274] Bhikhu Parekh. "What Is Multiculturalism?" December, 1999, http://www.india-seminar.com/1999/484/484%20parekh.htm Accessed 1/23/2007.
[275] Ibid.
[276] Raphael Samuel. *Island Stories: Unravelling Britain*. London, UK: Verso Press, 1998, 17.
[277] Kevin Foster. "New Faces, Old Fears: Migrants, Asylum Seekers and British Identity" *Third Text*, Vol. 20, Issue 6, November 2006, 684.
[278] In 17th century Britain, for instance, demographics were determined by parishes, which meant that they were determined through established churches. Legislation restricting populations based on religion—notably, excluding Jewish populations—was under frequent revision. In the legislative reforms enacted between 1940 and 1981, the preoccupation was with restricting black people, usually from Commonwealth countries.
[279] "New Faces, Old Fears: Migrants, Asylum Seekers and British Identity," 689.
[280] Ibid.
[281] Ibid.
[282] Ibid.

[283] Ibid, 691.
[284] Ibid.
[285] Ibid.
[286] *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 148.
[287] Ibid.
[288] Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*. London, UK: Verso Press, 1994,4.
[289] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, NY, NY: Routledge Press, 1995, 40.

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